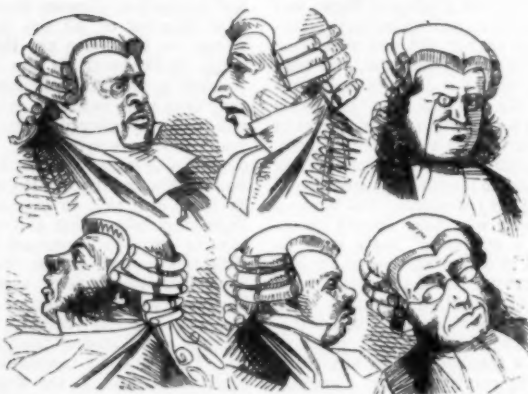


LONDON SOCIETY.

OCTOBER, 1869.

DOWN AT WESTMINSTER.



PEOPLE talk about the World of London. London has a dozen worlds at least. For all that some of these know or care of others they might as well be shining in different planets. But there is one world with which most other worlds cannot avoid making occasional acquaintance—that is the world of Westminster Hall. Apart from the legislative chambers, in whose proceedings everybody is concerned, it must be strange indeed for any member of the general community not to be interested, directly or indirectly, at one time or another, in a transaction connected with a Parliamentary Committee or a Court of Law. Certain it is that you will meet on most days down at Westminster—and more especially in the height of the season and the session, during the last two terms before the long vacation—representative men and women of all classes, drawn to-

gether by business or curiosity as the case may be.

The way down to Westminster—that is to say, the way of those who go from the Temple—has been made more easy than it was by the Thames Embankment, which will be a right royal road some of these days when it has intelligible approaches, and the trees have grown, and the small boys have been driven away, and carriages can be driven along it—when, in fact, it has dropped its present dissipated character of a show and a playground, and has settled down into a respectable thoroughfare. At present the swiftest mode of making the journey is by a penny steamer. But penny steamers are of course available only if you do not happen to be proud. The penny public whom you see on board are not pretty to look at, and seem principally possessed by a keen sense of economy,

extended not only to travelling expenses, but to the article of soap. Some philosophic barristers patronise the boats; indeed there is a plentiful sprinkling of these early in the morning; but being residents in chambers they are principally juniors, and do not include the great dignitaries of the profession. The latter are represented, however, by their clerks—barristers' clerks are wonderfully partial to penny steamers—who may be seen at all hours of the day going backwards and forwards with briefs and bags; and among them, with melancholy marking him for her own and remaining in undisputed possession, you may surely note the clerk of some unhappy Mr. Briefless, who 'brings his master's grey wig down in sorrow to the court' with a constancy worthy of a more successful cause. They are horrible means of progression—those penny steamers—but there is no reason why they should be so. With a supply of boats such as should be employed, the river might be as crowded as the streets, for the mode of travelling might be made far pleasanter than the mode of travelling by land, and in point of speed a steamer has an advantage over any carriage except a railway carriage. There are thousands upon thousands of the public who would be glad to make use of a better class of boats, say such as the Saloon Steamers that now ply above bridge, only of suitable size. With conveniences of this kind the journey between London and Westminster might be made a festive progress, and passengers would cheerfully pay, say, the prices charged on the Metropolitan Railway, first, second, and third class. I throw out the hint to speculators, who, I am certain, would never repent a little enterprise in this direction.

The way down to Westminster by road is broad and pleasant enough after you get out of the Strand; and scarcely have you passed Charing Cross than you come upon Westminster Hall, as represented by the people about you. It is, say, between eleven and twelve o'clock in the day. A few barristers, solicitors, and witnesses are still going down

to the courts; also 'parties' in actions, their witnesses, and their friends. But a great many more of all these classes are bound for the committees, which sit for the most part at twelve. Headlong Hansoms are dashing along, conveying gentlemen with that kind of cheerfulness in their faces which comes of being engaged, under profitable conditions, upon other people's business rather than their own. A large number of the same class are on foot, walking three or four abreast, and engaged in pleasant discussion. The happiest of all are the witnesses, for they have not the same cares upon them as the parliamentary agents and solicitors. All they have to do is to stay in London and wait day after day until they are wanted, receive their liberal diurnal allowances for their trouble, and in the end permit the counsel on their own side to extract from them such information as they may have to supply, and prevent, if possible, the counsel on the other side from demolishing their assertions. There are some members of parliament among the crowd, riding, driving, or walking, as the case may be. They are the members of the committees, and, if the day be a Wednesday, their number is increased by those going down to attend the morning sitting, or rather the afternoon sitting, of the House.

As you get lower down, into Parliament Street proper, Westminster is still more largely represented; for here, on the left, is the Whitehall Club, a handsome stone building of a few years' standing, which accommodates a large number of persons whose avocations call them to the neighbourhood. The members include M.P.s, parliamentary agents, barristers, solicitors, engineers, contractors, and business men of many kinds; and the institution, I believe, is found to be a useful success. For the public generally the popular resort appears to be a restaurant, still lower down, where even now, to judge by appearances as you pass the window, lunch seems to be going on. The lunches, however, at this hour, are not very numerous, and are con-

fined, it may be presumed, to people who have risen late and gone out in a hurry, and have not had time to breakfast. A couple of hours hence, besides the occupants of the tables, you will see a luncher on every high stool before the counter, forming together a serried line of determined refreshers, escaped for a brief but pleasant period from their serious duties on the other side of Palace Yard.

Palace Yard, which you now approach, has become a noble expanse, and it will be nobler when certain old houses are removed. But turning your back upon these, there is no such fine spectacle in London as that presented by the Houses of Parliament and Westminster Hall, with the adjacent objects, including the handsomest bridge in the metropolis. If you are not a person of importance, which you probably are, you will at least fancy that you are; for the policeman at the crossing, struck, no doubt, by your imposing presence, rushes forward and behaves with despotic tyranny towards a waggon, a light cart, and a four-wheel 'grinder,' which he compels to draw up in order not to interfere with your progress. He would exercise the same arbitrary authority towards a Hansom which is also among the vehicles emerging from the bridge; but the Hansom cabby is too much for the minion of the law, and nearly drives over you while you are availing yourself of the facility afforded by judicious regulations.

Inside the Hall of Rufus there are a great number of the same kind of persons as those who have accompanied you down Parliament Street, with the difference that the barristers, pacing up and down, or staying to talk in groups, are all wigged and gowned, and produce the inevitable impression which Mr. Dickens has made immortal, having reference to 'that variety of nose and whisker for which the bar of England is so justly celebrated.' There are a great many idlers among these—idlers in spite of themselves—and some of them seem to find it difficult to keep up an appearance of preoccupation. It would be a very valuable addi-

tion to a legal education if its recipient could manage to throw into his face an expression which should inevitably convey the idea to the public mind that he would be particularly wanted in court in a quarter of an hour. But I have never known perfect success attend an attempt of the kind; and the impression usually conveyed by a more or less unknown junior wandering about Westminster Hall is that it does not particularly matter where he may be. To-day one of this unhappy class has the temerity to take two ladies about, with an evident mission to show them the lions of the locality. You can see at once that they are not 'parties' or witnesses. Parties and witnesses may be as young, as blooming, and as fashionably dressed; but they would never be so smiling and so easy, wear that pretty fluttering manner, and talk with such charmingly volatile rapidity as the fair creatures in question. I should mention, by the way, for the sake of the proprieties, that, besides the barrister, they are accompanied by a young gentleman who is evidently their brother, from the entire contempt with which he regards them and their proceedings. He gives them entirely up to their friend in the wig, who may be heard to say in the course of conversation—

'I think we might hear some fun in the House of Lords. They are engaged with appeals, and I think Miss —— is still addressing the court. This is her tenth day.'

The idea of hearing a lady conducting her own case finds immediate favour, and the party soon make their way to the bar of the House. As we also are idling and looking about us, we may as well follow them.

They are very inhospitable to strangers in the House of Lords, that is to say, when the House is sitting in its legal capacity. The court occupies a very small part of the legislative chamber, and the impression produced is that the members huddle together in order that they may not have to speak too loud. There is no accommodation even for counsel who are not engaged in the proceedings, and

very little allowance is made for curiosity on the part of any class of persons; but you are free to push in at the bar and see and hear what you can.

Upon the present occasion there are only two lords besides the Lord Chancellor, and only one of these—an ex-Lord Chancellor himself—appears to take any interest in the proceedings. The central object is the suitor. This, as we have already

heard, is a lady. She is addressing the court when we enter, seems to have been addressing it for some time past, and evidently intends to address it for some time in the future. As she stands behind a table, upon which her papers are placed, she is in advance of us, and we can catch a glimpse of her face only at intervals, when she turns aside to place her hand upon a document which she wishes to con-



sult. But we can observe at first glance that she is a little lady rather than otherwise, that she has a neat, slender figure, carefully and compactly clad in black, and that upon her head she wears a little hat, 'of the period' as to size, and to some extent in the manner in which it is worn, but by no means exaggerated in any respect. Upon further observation you see that she has what

is called a clever face, with an expression indicative of culture and refinement; and the latter conclusion is justified by the voice, which is clear and ringing, and remarkable for its nice intonation. The lady, too, enjoys the advantage of an easy flow of language, which never halts for a point or an expression, and she has apparently a thorough mastery of her case. If the Lord Chancellor

ventures to question a statement or criticise a conclusion, the fair pleader at once puts her little black-gloved hand upon the document containing her authority, and the great legal functionary is at once confuted. The next time he ventures an objection the same process is repeated, until his lordship at last seems to arrive at the belief that it is safest not to open his mouth. The other lords, when equally rash, meet with a similar fate; so by degrees the lady has everything her own way, and continues her address unmolested. The composure with which she goes over her ground is something wonderful. There is no flurry, no undue excitement, and only a certain serious emphasis which her arguments receive distinguish her manner from that of an ordinary advocate, and indicate that she is pleading her own cause and has a strong interest in the case. She has near her a legal adviser in the person of a Queen's counsel, but she seldom consults him, and seems indeed to know her own business remarkably well. This is the tenth day of her address, and it threatens to last for many days more: it would be rash indeed to calculate when it is likely to conclude. The case, it may be here mentioned, is a very complicated one, involving a question of legitimacy; the documents connected with it are of a voluminous character, and the lady has a great tendency to read these at length, to refresh herself, through their agency, in the intervals of original argument. How the case will end I will not venture to surmise, but the reflection certainly strikes one that if ladies get called to the bar and advocate other people's cases with the persistency that they do their own, the proceedings of the courts will be considerably lengthened, and far greater demands than under present conditions will be made upon the endurance of the judges.

Happily we are doing no more than amuse ourselves; so after half an hour's acquaintance with the great legitimacy case we are content to follow the example—set a quarter of an hour before—of the

young barrister and his interesting friends, and betake ourselves elsewhere.

There are several committees sitting up stairs, and seeing a throng of persons proceeding thither we follow them, as in curiosity bound. The Commons gallery is crowded with counsel, solicitors, agents, witnesses, and all the rest of the people of whom we have seen so many specimens in Parliament Street; for one of the rooms has just been cleared for the deliberation of the committee. Some are walking up and down; others are standing about in groups; everybody is talking; there is general excitement, and some little hilarity on the part of those belonging to the apparently winning side. The witnesses are, as usual, more lively than anybody else. It is all holiday with them, far away as they are from their provincial homes; and their feet *not* being upon their native heaths their names are all the more Macgregor. They begin already to take refreshment at the adjacent buffet, to compare notes as to who stayed latest, or did something most remarkable somewhere last night, and to make arrangements for dining together this evening and going to some entertainment afterwards—the words 'Gaiety' and 'Alhambra' being not unfrequently heard in such discussions. Mingled with this kind of talk you hear a great deal about corporations, town councils, water supplies, preambles, clauses, traffic, trade, shipping, curves, gradients, and engineering in general to any extent. An Irish Bill which is under investigation in one of the rooms is a frequent subject of conversation. It is connected with the supply of water to a large city, and a certain corporation is more anxious, somehow, to confer the boon than the ratepayers are to receive it. We enter the room in expectation of some amusement, and are not disappointed.

It is a spacious and imposing apartment, conceived when the architect was in a massive mood, but with compensating tendencies towards lightness. The oak panel-

ling and the window-frames are in antique style, but designed with a modern eye to business. The fashion is bold, with no gratuitous ornament. It is mediævalism made easy; mediævalism made light and cheerful, and receiving a modern character from green baize, blotting-paper, and wafers. At the upper end of the room, within the bar which excludes the profane public, is a table of horseshoe shape, at the upper end of which,

on the convex side, sit the committee. On the right—looking from the lower end of the room—is an exclusive table occupied by the clerk of the committee, who makes minutes of the proceedings. In the centre of the horseshoe is another exclusive table, occupied by a shorthand writer, engaged, I suppose, by the promoters, whose business it is to take a full note—that is to say, take every word—of what passes. There are reporters for



the press also, at another table, in a corner; but their office can scarcely be an arduous one, judging from the little you ever see in the newspaper of proceedings before Parliamentary Committees. At a long table in front are the counsel, agents, attorneys, &c.

One of the counsel—a silk gown—is addressing the committee; but the members thereof do not seem to

be listening with much attention. Their attitude is one of keen and appreciative indifference; and but for an occasional question in reference to a doubtful point you would think that they were not listening at all. The fact is that they are following the statement with much attention—with more, indeed, than they would bestow upon the speeches of counsel in general;

for the committee are for the most part men of business—in a parliamentary way, but still men of business—and regard counsel *primâ facie* as impostors. But the counsel in question is a great man. He is one of the leaders of the Parliamentary bar. He is allied to noble families, and makes fabulous sums of money. So the committee pay him some kind of deference when they make any sign at all; and when they speak to him it is always with social respect. They address him by his full name—a double surname—and always with a certain graciousness, even upon a point of difference. It is always—'Excuse me, Mr. Verbose Jawkins, but I do not quite understand;' or 'I think, Mr. Verbose Jawkins, that the committee have some difficulty'—and so forth. Mr. Verbose Jawkins, in the meantime—(he is a big, bland, handsome man, with a grand society manner)—is gliding through his brief in the pleasantest possible style, patronizing his facts, and setting forth his conclusions as if they were so many friends of his, who must make their way upon his introduction. He has to refer a great deal to his papers, and is occasionally coached by the keen gentleman at his elbow. But he talks all the time that he is reading; and when he pauses for verbal suggestions, always does so with the air of being unnecessarily interrupted, and, after receiving enlightenment in this manner, corrects previous statements of his own with a severe air, as if they had been made by somebody else. In this manner he goes on for forty minutes; and then, after a peroration which shows that he at least is quite convinced, runs away and leaves the rest of the business to his juniors. He has during the forty minutes been opening the case for the promoters, and his fee for this little attention is five hundred guineas, to say nothing of refreshers and consultations.

Mr. Verbose Jawkins being wanted in another committee, the examination of witnesses is proceeded with under the conduct of juniors, as I have intimated. But

all goes well. Never were witnesses more willing; never were counsel more alive to the importance of their communications. One of the witnesses is an elderly gentleman, and the counsel who examines him is a very young gentleman. The former, in fact, is the father of the latter; but the coincidence of names is apparently not noticed, and the examination goes on as glibly as may be.

The counsel looks as if he had never seen the witness before. Referring to his brief, apparently for information, he says—

'Your name, I think, sir, is Mulligan?'

'It is,' replies Mr. Mulligan, with an evident desire for frankness and fair play.

'You are an alderman, I think, of the city of —,' rejoins the counsel, determined, in the interest of his clients, that their witnesses shall speak with the authority of the offices they hold.

'I am,' says the witness, taking upon himself, with Roman fortitude, the responsibility involved.

'Then, Mr. Mulligan,' pursues the counsel, 'I shall be obliged if you will tell the honourable committee'—and so forth. Junior counsel, I notice, are generally particular in referring to the committee as the *honourable* committee, which is a deferential concession not strictly enjoined by etiquette. I suppose they think that it looks parliamentary; and perhaps it does.

While the examination of the witness is being thus agreeably conducted lunch-time arrives. There is no adjournment for this refreshment, and indeed the committee alone seem to be influenced by the event. At about two o'clock stealthy waiters creep in, and bring to the members small plates of sandwiches and little cruetts of what appears to be sherry, the latter being imbibed from tumblers, with the addition of water. As a general rule members take in their lunch with an air of reserve, as if it were statistics which might be outbid, or arguments to be subsequently refuted. But one of the number I

notice receives his with relish, as if he believed in it, and intended to give an opinion in its favour. Counsel are evidently not supposed to require extraneous support, in common with the other assistants at the proceedings. Some, I suppose, are too busy; others too idle. Among the latter the clerk, I think, must be held to bear the palm. He is a young man—always a young man—scrupulously dressed, with an eye to dignity rather than display; and, like all officials with too much leisure, he seems to hold work in supreme contempt. He does a great deal in the fresh disposition, from time to time, of his papers, but has little employment for his pen. I suspect that he considers the actors in the scene as so many harmless lunatics, who have a *raison d'être* for his especial benefit, which benefit is rather a bore than otherwise. The most occupied person is one who has no formal recognition. He is the short-hand writer at the centre table, close by which is the chair assigned for the accommodation of the witnesses. His pen never ceases so long as anything is being said. He gets a little holiday if the counsel read something already on record, have to wait a minute or two for a document, or pause while refreshing themselves with facts; but these are but brief cases in the desert of his labours. He has one advantage, however, which those otherwise engaged do not enjoy. I suspect that he knows nothing of what is passing, and while pursuing an almost mechanical task is able to think about anything he pleases. He certainly never seems to take the smallest interest in the proceedings. The reporters for the press, who are digesting them into narrative form, evince something like an opinion, as you may hear in remarks from time to time, or see in the expression of their faces. But the official stenographer is unmoved as the Sphinx, and takes no account of the meaning of the words—his business is only with the words themselves. He does not even feel bound to see; and I believe that if the chairman were to take

his seat with his head under his arm this imperturbable functionary would not consider himself called upon to record the fact. I have heard of a gentleman of this class, on the staff of a daily journal, being sent at Easter or Christmas time, when critics are in great request, to write a review of a theatrical performance. He attended with note-book and pencils as soon as the doors opened, was a little puzzled at the overture, but brightened up when the play began, and then proceeded cheerfully to take a full note of 'Romeo and Juliet' from beginning to end. He was rather surprised, on arriving afterwards at the office, to find that he would not be required to 'write out' the result of his labours. Upon another occasion, it is added, he was deputed to furnish an account of an eclipse of the sun which was exciting unusual attention. He attended with characteristic punctuality, note-book in hand, and waited with great patience during the progress of the event. But as nobody connected with the business in hand was heard to make any remark he conceived that he had nothing to do, so contented himself with sending in a report that the proceedings were devoid of interest. Such men as these are fortunate if they have much to do with Parliamentary Committees; for they escape from a great deal that is boring to other people.

There is nothing remarkable in the cross-examination of the witnesses, as far as the opposing counsel are concerned. But there is a gentleman representing a particular body of ratepayers, whose interests are affected by the Bill in a particular manner, who is not a barrister, but an attorney, and he imports into the proceedings any amount of liveliness that may be missed by his brethren of the law. He is a North-of-Ireland man, and does not care who knows it. His accent, indeed, proclaims the fact in unmistakable tones. The question involved has nothing to do with politics; but the importation of the Orange element seems inevitable in his case. Before he begins to speak, you can see 'No

surrender' visibly depicted in his countenance; and were he to volunteer to sing 'Boyne Water,' in illustration of his case, you would consider the song as a matter of course. He bullies the witnesses with forty-barrister power, and in the intervals of his questions persists, in defiance of all rule, upon addressing the committee in a similar strain. He is told that he must not do anything of the kind, so he does it more and more; and when he has abused everybody else he takes to abuse the committee itself. Like the gentleman of debating tendencies, who applied for the situation at the Bank, and was asked to state his qualifications, he 'combines the most powerful invective with the wildest humour,' and he treats his audience to an unlimited supply of both. The committee at first do not exactly know how to meet this kind of attack. They are protected in the House by the Sergeant-at-Arms, but here there is no functionary responsible for the preservation of order. A judge in court can invest an usher with terrible powers upon an occasion of the kind; but the committee have no usher, nor any analogous official. So, after enduring this belligerent advocate considerably beyond the limits of endurance they order him to sit down, and be silent. As well might they order a hurricane to take a calm view of affairs. The belligerent advocate only goes harder to work, and in connection, somehow, with a water-supply and the rights of ratepayers, we have again a furious tirade, in which the siege of Derry figures in a prominent manner, and 'Boyne Water' becomes imminent. So in this dilemma the committee speak to somebody. I believe the somebody is the clerk, who has a great deal in common with the stenographer, and is sitting patiently during the scene, considering it no business of his, as he cannot see his way to including it in the minutes of the proceedings. That functionary seems, however, aroused at last to the consciousness that something is the matter; and I fancy that it is through his agency that a messenger is found, and a policeman appears

upon the scene. But one policeman is nothing to a belligerent advocate, with his head full of 'Prentice-boys at Derry, No Surrender, the Victory of the Boyne, the glorious, pious, and immortal memory of King William, and the rights of wronged ratepayers, all at the same time; and he makes a sturdy resistance to authority. So more policemen are called; and when four of those functionaries have arrived, it is found that constitutional rights are controllable, and that even resistance to the water-supply may be kept within proper bounds. By this I mean that it is possible to eject the belligerent advocate—not merely push him out by the neck and shoulders, but carry him out by the arms and legs—which extreme process is duly performed, despite protests which, I am sorry to say, besides the action of the tongue, are intimately associated with the hands and feet. The belligerent advocate, in fact, fights like a kangaroo, which is said to stand upon its tail, and use its four extremities at once as aggressive agents. The efforts of the police, however, are in the end successful, and the belligerent advocate is carried to the gallery outside, where he is left to finish his speech as he best may to a crowd of clerks and idlers. The business of the committee is then resumed.

The consideration of the Bill is likely to occupy a great many days. Meanwhile let us look into another committee-room. Here the scene is very similar to that presented in the adjacent apartment. At first sight you would say that there were the same walls and windows, the same horseshoe table, the same committee, the same clerk, and the same short-hand writer. I cannot say the same counsel, for there are no counsel at all. The subject of investigation is connected with the registration of voters, and the witnesses are examined by the members of the committee themselves. Glancing again at the latter, you observe that they consist of prominent political men, including several Cabinet Ministers, the latter of whom are remarkably reticent, and seem bent upon acquiring informa-

tion for their own purposes, as they doubtless are. The proceedings are very dull, and do not repay the uninterested listener, who is unlikely to make a long stay. In another room a railway bill is undergoing investigation. It is an auxiliary to the Metropolitan line, and a great map of the route is affixed to the wall. We come next to an apartment where several little bottles of water are engaging the attention of the committee, and several scientific gentlemen are explaining the results of their investigation into the quality of the more or less pure liquid. But there is nothing very interesting in all this, and a proposal to descend once more into Westminster Hall will probably meet with approbation.

All the courts are sitting, and the proceedings in each must concern a great number of persons. But there is one court—the one whose entrance is the farthest from Palace Yard and the nearest, therefore, to the steps we are now descending—which seems to have a peculiar interest for the public. There is a large crowd outside, the members of which are evidently incredulous of the policeman's assurance that there is no room for them within. But they can scarcely fail to concede the fact when they see the concourse which pours forth when the doors are presently opened; for it is now the middle of the day, and the court has adjourned for refreshment.

In either body the idlers are predominant. Scores upon scores of these seem to spend their days down at Westminster, with no apparent object but to obtain gratuitous entertainment of a dramatic character. In this object, however, they must be frequently disappointed; for, although many cases in court may be 'as good as a play,' a great deal depends upon what play they are as good as. They may be a great deal better than some plays, and yet not be amusing. But I suspect that many of these mysterious people, who patiently sit out the long hours when everybody else wishes to get away, have a stronger inducement than mere amusement. Some are so mouldy in appearance, and so

abject in their manners, that they must surely come for shelter and something like society. It is a distraction, I suppose, for these unhappy men to concern themselves about other people's business rather than their own. I say men, but there are some women among them, and their case is still more anomalous. They come in couples, never alone, as the men always do, and instead of being abject in their manners, take up a tone of smart cynicism when commenting upon the proceedings to one another. To judge from their remarks, which I have overheard from time to time, I suspect these ladies to be under the fixed and unchangeable belief that her Majesty's judges are a set of old villains who have themselves been guilty of most of the delinquencies upon which they sit in judgment, and that the counsel—less wicked than the judges only because they are younger—are all habitual liars, and hate truth as another person, to whom their fair critics frequently compare them, is said to hate holy water. Further, I believe the said fair critics to entertain the impression that no poor man or woman can possibly obtain justice in a court of law.

This class of persons—men and women—form, as I have said, the majority of those who emerge from the court—which court, it may be here mentioned, is no other than the Court for the trial of Matrimonial Causes, otherwise known as the Divorce Court. But many of those concerned in the proceedings also come forth, and either go off to lunch or distribute themselves in groups about the Hall. A case of unusual interest is to be taken presently, and the parties appear to be all present. That well-built gentleman with the objectionably curled whiskers and the somewhat simpering smile, who is dressed with such scrupulous care and regard for conventional authenticity, I take at once to be the co-respondent. What nonsense it is to judge people by appearances. The only co-respondent present (and he belongs to another case) I afterwards find to be that ugly, brutal-

looking man with a black beard, whose countenance, sufficient to convict him elsewhere, ought to be his best defence in the Divorce Court—and would be, probably, were the court a less experienced tribunal. The gentleman with the curled whiskers walks off with a lady, and promenades with her up and down the Hall. The fact I find to be that he is the lady's solicitor, who is giving her some parting words of advice previous to her appearance in the box; for the lady, it seems, is the petitioner, not the respondent, and will be the first witness called. She is a charming creature, the petitioner: gushing to a fault; with fair, fluffy, and fashionable hair, and no bonnet to speak of, as regards its size, though the accessory is calculated in every other respect to inspire admiring remark. Her costume—well, it is one of those complete dresses which are especially called 'costumes' by milliners. Altogether her array is admirably calculated to encourage her natural gifts and graces; and it would be difficult to conceive a more perfect object of sympathy—except that she shows no sign of having been ill-treated. Her husband, I am informed, is not to be seen in the Hall. He is probably in court. But some of his witnesses are there; for the monster, it seems, intends to defend the case. The witnesses pointed out to me are a couple of women—one said to be a cook, while the face of the other says 'charwoman' as plainly as countenance can speak. These two worthies are sitting together upon the steps of the court discussing some sandwiches which they have brought with them in a basket, and enlivening their collation by frequent appeals to a flat bottle containing a white liquid which, other things being equal, might be mistaken for water. The naked eye indeed might make the mistake, but the naked nose never; besides, they take it in measured doses from a wine-glass, which is a mark of attention that people seldom pay to liquid in its virgin condition. The fair creatures seem to be

greatly entertained by their conversation, which has partly reference to the particulars of the case just concluded, and partly to their expectations of the case about to commence. They are not long in anxiety concerning the latter; for the judge is now found to have taken his seat, and there is a general rush into the court. We get foremost places—never mind how—and are able both to hear and see.

The petitioner's counsel, like her solicitor, is a 'ladies' lawyer'—a Q.C., and a highly successful man in his profession: He tempers firmness with the utmost suavity, and his appearance generally is greatly in his favour. He is none of your slovenly barristers who wear slatternly robes, crumpled bands, and wigs that have not been dressed for years. His appointments are all neat and compact, like himself generally, and he even carries his regard for the graces so far as to wear gloves, unlike most men at the bar, who fancy, I suppose, that clients and attorneys think them unbusiness-like. He states the petitioner's case with all the eloquence of which he is master; and such a course of insult and injury as he narrates one could scarcely suppose to be exercised towards so fair a victim except by a monster in human form. Not, however, that such is the appearance of the respondent, who is now pointed out to us, sitting at the solicitor's table. He looks a mere boy; a little dissipated, perhaps, in appearance, but more foolish than anything else. I believe his mental condition to be induced, not by insanity, as some of his friends have tried to make out, but a strong determination of blackguardism to the head. Looking at the petitioner, one cannot help hoping that he will prove the M. in H. F. which he is represented to be.

The petitioner is called upon in due course for her evidence. There are some ladylike delays, as there always are in such cases. First the usher tells her that she must remove her right glove, as preliminary to holding 'the book.' What a pity that she was not apprised

of this necessity a quarter of an hour before! Gloves that fit like gloves are not got off in a hurry; so there is a little delay, not made less by the confusion of the wearer, who is evidently conscious that the eyes of Europe are upon her. Then the judge tells her that she must lift her veil. He has a notion that the short spotted piece of net which the lady wears stretched across her face can be thrown over her head on the shortest notice. Nothing of the kind. She has to unpin it, and take it bodily off. 'So very provoking,' as she afterwards remarks; 'before the whole court, too!' I am bound to say that she looks far more injured without her veil than with it; for a pretty little spotted thing which throws up the delicacy of the complexion is not so well calculated to inspire pity as it ought to be. The good impression which she has already created is confirmed by the manner in which she gives her evidence—somewhat reluctantly, and with the sympathizing assistance of the junior counsel, but consistently and to the purpose. She is not unagitated, as you may suppose, and at one point in her statement drops the glove which has been withdrawn. This is picked up at once by the taxing master of the court, who retains it during the remainder of her examination, and then hands it back with a chivalrous air such as would not have been expected from so prosaic an official.

At last, after having been thoroughly stared out of countenance by everybody in court for twenty minutes or so, and made the subject of *sotto voce* commentary of an improving kind on every side, the petitioner resumes her place in front of her counsel, her first care being to re-attach the spotted veil, which she does with the aid of a young person of most exemplary appearance, looking like a governess with a grievance, by whom she is accompanied. The glove she resumes at her leisure.

Some evidence follows in support of her case, which seems as strong a one as could well be.

But the respondent has a case also, and his too is not without support. The cook and the charwoman, inspired by their lunch, compromise themselves so completely that they are told one after the other to stand down; but the evidence of a gentleman who follows them is decidedly damaging to the petitioner. He makes some unexpected statements, indeed, which the other side shows no signs of meeting. When the time comes, however, when he is open to cross-examination, the junior counsel for the petitioner, who has never held a brief before, makes, from the freshness of his inexperience, a suggestion to his senior, to which the senior, after some hesitation, accedes. The witness, it should be here stated, bears a name not unknown as a novelist, but the fact has not yet appeared before the court.

Ignoring loftily the allegations made by the witness, the junior proceeds in this fashion with his cross-examination—

Counsel. 'I believe, sir, that among your other avocations you are a writer for the press?'

Witness. 'I am.'

C. 'You are a writer of fiction, I believe?'

W. 'Yes, I write novels.'

C. 'You write from your imagination, I think; you invent what you put into your books?'

W. 'I certainly do not take my writings from other people.'

C. 'And what you write is not true?'

W. 'I do not pretend it to be so.'

C. 'Oh! you do not pretend it to be so. So everything you write is simply lies; there is not a word of truth in any of your works?'

W. 'They are written from the imagination.'

C. 'Do not prevaricate, sir; remember, you are upon your oath. Have you been writing truth, or have you been writing lies?'

W. 'Well, lies, since you will have it so.'

C. 'Very well, sir. And for how long have you been writing nothing but lies?'

W. 'I must really appeal to his

lordship—whether I am to be subjected.—

Judge. 'You had better answer the counsel, sir.'

C. 'I repeat, for how many years have you been writing nothing but lies?'

W. 'Well, since you will have it so—about twelve years.'

C. 'Very well, sir; it would have been much better to have told us so candidly at first. And you have a mother, I think, who also writes lies?'

W. 'I have a mother who used to write novels.'

C. 'This is very sad—that I cannot induce you to be definite in your terms. For how many years did your mother write lies?'

W. 'She wrote for about twenty years.'

C. 'And during that time never wrote a word of truth?'

W. 'I suppose not, in the sense you mean.'

C. 'That will do, sir. You have been writing nothing but lies for the last twelve years, and your mother wrote nothing but lies for twenty years before. I need not question you as to your statements concerning my client, as the court and the jury must have formed their own opinion upon that subject. You may stand down, sir.'

The witness's testimony is thus triumphantly shaken—a fact of which the leader does not fail to make use in his reply. The judge tells the jury that they need not trouble themselves about the facts elicited in cross-examination; but the jury are evidently impressed with the lying propensities of the witness, and return a verdict for the petitioner without leaving the box.

A friend tells me that my memory is misleading me, and that the case to which I refer was not tried in the Divorce Court. It may be so; but it is nevertheless true that even in such a well-conducted tribunal as that of Lord Penzance a pretty petitioner excites more interest than an ugly one, and a bold line of cross-examination will sometimes materially assist a case.

One of the chief difficulties in the Divorce Court is to keep out the

gentler sex, who always form a large proportion of the auditory. As the recitals are not always strictly 'proper,' their presence is frequently a source of embarrassment to counsel and the court. It is told of the late Sir Crosswell Crosswell that upon a counsel making an objection to proceed under the circumstances, the judge directed the usher to request that all respectable females would leave the court. The request was made, and there was a stir among the interesting sex in question. The majority rose and withdrew, but three kept their places and showed no signs of following the example of the others. There was a pause; after which, the judge, addressing the counsel, said—

'All respectable females having withdrawn, you can proceed, Mr. —.'

We turn next into another court, where nothing less interesting than a breach of promise of marriage case is being tried.

The experience of most persons, I fancy, would tend to the conclusion that the offences which lead to actions of this nature are continually being committed in all classes of society, and that the occasional cases which we hear of in the courts are but a small proportion of the number. It is seldom, indeed, that we find an instance in which both of the parties belong to the upper ranks; for it is only under very exceptional circumstances that persons of high social status would voluntarily submit to the exposure involved. As a general rule, the plaintiff or the defendant, or, it may be, both the one and the other, are of eccentric character, whose courtship has been removed from the ordinary conditions which precede matrimony. There are usually discrepancies as to age, or station, or money, or good sense, or good looks; and the revelations to which the proceedings lead frequently bring before us the strangest pictures of life. Here, for instance, is one as developed in evidence to-day. The plaintiff and defendant stand in the same relation to one another as the plaintiff and defendant in the case of 'Bardell v. Pickwick'—that is to say, Mrs.

Brown let lodgings, and Mr. Jones lived in them—otherwise there is not much resemblance between the two cases. Mrs. Brown was a widow with two children. She enjoyed a combination of personal characteristics which, as her counsel reminded the court, might, upon Royal authority, be considered attractions; that is to say, she was 'fair, fat, and forty,' though it seems that she did not, in the opinion of those who saw her in court, look anything like the age which was considered so charming by his late Majesty George the Fourth. Mr. Jones, described by the plaintiff's counsel to be about fifty-five, but 'guessed' by one of the witnesses to be nearly twenty years older, is evidently, from his appearance, an aged man, is paralysed besides, and has been so for some years, though one of the witnesses says that 'he sometimes got better.' He is, however, capable of enjoying life in his own way, which way seems to be by no means disassociated with amusements out of doors. Thus it appears that he has been in the habit of accompanying Mrs. Jones, her two children, and his particular friend Mr. Robinson, a retired builder, to music-halls and similar places of recreation; and not only Mr. Robinson, but the cabman who drove them about, is stated to have been aware of the understanding between him and the fair—not to say fat and forty—widow. Mr. Robinson's view of the matter was that Mr. Brown, by proposing such an alliance, was 'going to make an old fool of himself,' but it is to be feared that Mr. Robinson's opinion was not quite disinterested, for he admitted that he lived not only with, but 'upon' the defendant, in whose premises he must have been rather at home than otherwise; for, according to his own comprehensive account, he slept there, he breakfasted there, he dined there, he supped there, and he 'grogged' there. The force of living with a man, one would think, could no farther go. In return for this slight accommodation he was in the habit of giving defendant such little assistance as his infirmities might require; and the idea of being displaced by such

an intrusion as a wife seems to have been peculiarly distasteful to him. For the defendant, it should be observed, was a rich man for his station in life, and 'did not care who knew it,' for he had cards announcing that he was 'a widower and gentleman,' and was so 'described in the books of the Bank of England,' and further, that he had an office where he lent money. He told his friends that he had nearly five thousand pounds in the Bank, and that he would settle four thousand of it upon the plaintiff. The cabman, who, in consequence of being regularly employed to drive the party about on their pleasures, seems to have been quite on intimate terms, deposed that the defendant spoke about the lady 'in a jocular way,' the jocularity consisting, as he explained, somewhat to the surprise of the judge, in saying that she was a very nice woman, and that he intended to marry her. The cabman, too, was able to tell that he had driven Mr. Jones to Doctors' Commons, and saw him get a marriage-licence, and present it to Mrs. Brown. Nay, more, he certified that the defendant had given a material guarantee of his honourable intentions in a manner, I fancy, hitherto unknown to courtship, having ordered a brass plate with his own name to be placed upon her door, and adorned the portal with a touching mark of his affection in the form of a new knocker. It might be said that 'he who adored her had left but the name,' and that, notwithstanding the knocker, he did not care a rap about her. But such things are difficult to conceive; and the evidence discloses every appearance of the fact that if ever man meant seriously towards a lady, that man was Mr. Jones.

But he failed in his troth after all. We are proverbially told that one power proposes, and another disposes; but Mr. Jones did both. He had proposed to Mrs. Brown, and then he felt disposed not to have her. Hence the present action. The defence, as frequently happens in breach-of-promise cases, is that the defendant was not worth having; and he certainly presents a helpless and generally abject appearance in

court. But appearances of the kind are not always implicitly relied upon by judges and experienced juries. A wealthy farmer, under similar circumstances, has been known to present himself before the tribunal in the guise of a farm labourer, in a smockfrock, with hay-bands round his legs, a pitchfork in his hand, and presenting generally, in his language and deportment, a picture of Cymon before he fell in love with Iphigenia. Such stooping to conquer is usually appreciated by spectators, and there is evidently a suspicion in the present case that Mr. Jones's miserable make-up has been overdone. Both Mr. Robinson and the cabman distinctly state that he was a very different person during his courtship—looked well fed, was well dressed, wore jewellery, and took care of himself generally. So his counsel's appeal cannot, evidently, be sustained upon the grounds urged; and the judge directing that the question is simply one of damages, the jury assess them at a good round sum—evidently beyond the expectations of the lady's counsel, who, in the absence of any allegation of damaged affections, had not anticipated that a business-like view of her loss of position would have produced so much. But the element of hazard enters considerably into the finding of juries, as we all know.

The next case is of a commonplace character, and there is nothing to note except a couple of stories then and there told to me, of a similar number of counsel present. One is a tall man, who looks principally keen, but has a great turn for humour, and will make any case in which he is engaged amusing. He has a large practice now, but a very few years ago he had none at all, and was glad to hold any brief with which his more fortunate friends might entrust him. One of these was a very eminent member of the bar, who happened one day to have a particularly bad case, which, scandal has it, he felt particularly inclined to shirk. It was a bill case of a very disgraceful kind, and his client was on the wrong side; so, under the plea of business elsewhere, he handed over his brief to the faithful

junior, and sought refuge in another court. Half an hour afterwards he was in Westminster Hall, taking his ease in legal meditation fancy free, when the faithful junior was seen rushing out of court with his gown torn nearly off his shoulders, his bands rather more behind than before, and his wig scarcely asserting a connection with the wearer's head.

'Well, how have you got on?' asked the great man, smiling, and declining to notice the other's confusion.

'Got on!' was the agitated answer; 'the bill is impounded, the witnesses are ordered not to leave the court, the attorney is to be struck off the rolls, and I—I have with difficulty escaped!'

What a charming thing it is to be a great man at the bar—so that you can leave embarrassing cases of the kind to faithful juniors!

The other member of the bar to whom I have alluded is a very severe-looking person who enjoys a great deal of what is said to have been Lord Thurlow's privilege—that of looking a great deal wiser than any man ever was. Did I say that I heard only one story connected with him? I should have said two. One is to this effect. When a young man—he has learned a great deal since then, I have no doubt—he held the office of judge in a small colony. He was the sole occupant of the bench, so he carried everything his own way. One day a member of the local bar disputed his ruling upon a certain point and appealed to printed authority in support of his position. The judge's account of the incident, as given by himself, is said to be this: 'Would you believe it—one of my own bar had the impertinence to tell me that he was right and that I was wrong, and he appealed to a law book to support him—his own book, and the only one in the colony.'

'And what did you do?' was the natural question.

'What did I do?' was the indignant answer; 'there was only one thing to do; I borrowed the book from him, and lost it, so that we shall hear no more scandal of that kind.'

A prisoner brought before him on a charge of theft pleaded 'guilty.' The judge explained to him that he was not obliged to take this course, but might have the benefit of a trial, so the prisoner pleaded 'not guilty.' The jury acquitted him. Upon which the judge, addressing the accused, said in his most severe manner—

'Prisoner at the bar, you have confessed yourself a thief and the jury have found you a liar—begone from my sight.'

We are now in another court, where an unusual scene is presented to a stranger. He has surely come into a convent! There are nuns on all sides of him, varied by a few priests! At a second glance, however, he is assured of the fact. He has not come into a convent, but a convent has come into court. There is a nun in the witness box—a mother or a sister, which is it? Some of the mothers are as young as some of the sisters. She is certainly younger than most of the nuns present, has a comely face and figure, and the clearest of complexions. She gives her evidence—which has reference to a late member of the community who has been expelled, and the legality of whose expulsion is being tried by the court—with an artless innocence which interests all present. She is the best witness that the defendants have had on their behalf—for some members of the order were not more engaging in appearance than nuns need be, and cannot be considered to have given their evidence without a strong feeling against the plaintiff. This same plaintiff, who sits in front of the counsel, with her face towards the bench, has been the main object of public attention for a fortnight past, and her case promises to engage the court for days still to come. She is closely veiled, and the curious public have not been able to see her face since she gave her evidence in the box. She talks sometimes to an old gentleman and a young lady who sit on either side of her—the latter understood to be her sister—but otherwise shows little signs of animation. The sister, by the way, is of the period, periodically, and her elaborate coiffure, bonnet,

and robes, contrast strangely with the muffled figure, in deep black, of the ex-nun. The latter made out a strong case in the beginning, but it has been weakened considerably by the character of the defence; and the revelations of convent life, made on the one side or the other, have at least not been so alarming as they were expected to be by the public. Still the impression upon the minds of those who have watched the proceedings is that the girl has been harshly treated, and it is generally expected that she will get a verdict with tolerably substantial damages. And here it may be mentioned—as I am not adhering to unity as to time, and have not confined myself to any one day 'down at Westminster,' that the end justified the anticipations, as far as the court was concerned. How far the case can be considered concluded remains to be seen.

At four o'clock the committees close their proceedings, the Speaker of the House of Commons being announced in the different rooms as 'at prayers;' and the Hall is once more full of the moving life from upstairs. Some of the courts, too, have risen, and are pouring forth their quota to the crowd. There is a large assembly of the public, moreover, in the Hall, waiting to see the members go into the House; and there is a great deal of cheering and counter-demonstration as certain statesmen are recognised. For a great question, of a constitutional character, is before the legislature, and popular feeling runs strongly on both sides. In a short time the last court will have closed, and all engaged therein will have disappeared, except those of the lawyers who are members of the House. These have a laborious time of it, and must perhaps attend in their places for two or three hours before they can get away to dine, either in the House or elsewhere. So those of the public who choose to remain must transfer their interest to a new direction. For ourselves, I think you will agree with me that we have had enough of Westminster for the present.

S. L. B.

OXFORD AS IT IS.

TO the anxious parent unable to decide whether he is or is not right in committing the plastic material of his son's nature to the all-moulding forces of a university career, and who finally, not without vague misgivings, excited by the remarkable stories that he has heard as to the way in which Oxford has been instrumental in shipwrecking the hopes of many a promising young man, entrusts his charge to the critical influences of academical existence; to all those who know Oxford only as it is depicted in the pages of flimsy novelists and sensational playwrights; to those, in short, who have formed their impressions of the old university town upon the Isis on the strength of loose intelligence conveyed to them second or third hand, and who may care about correcting them by reference to the standard of reality and truth, the remarks, which we shall have to make in this paper on the subject of Oxford as it is, will be not merely, considering the fact that the present month witnesses the inauguration of the academical year, seasonable, but, in view of the insight which it is to be hoped we may give them, and the errors which we may tend to remove, profitable and valuable as well. Precisely in proportion as the class from which the colleges of Oxford are annually recruited with undergraduates has increased, will the importance of this theme have increased also, and the circle of interests to which it necessarily appeals have become enlarged. It seems somewhat remarkable that the time which the champions of that sonorous war-cry should have selected for demanding the nationalisation of the universities, should be above all others the present, when the ideal condition of things so clamorously and unceasingly shouted for is infinitely nearer attainment than it ever was before. Assuredly if by nationalisation is meant a gathering together of the representatives of every grade and order in our social economy, from the highest to the

lowest, within our academic walls, nationalisation is pre-eminently the feature already existing in the Oxford of to-day.

Happy is the nation which has no history; happy would it be for Oxford, and for those who, for whatever reason, are interested in her, if she had never attracted the attention of the writers of flimsy novels and fashionable romances. By these she has been monstrously caricatured at every turn. She has suffered alike at the hands of friend and foe, and those who would have wished her best have misrepresented her most. We all know the kind of view which authors of this type have delighted to give of the everyday existence of the average undergraduate. As we recal it to our mind there float before us visions of apartments gorgeous with mirrors and luxurions with velvet, replete in every corner with articles of vertu from the East and delicate knick-knacks from Turin. The atmosphere is pervaded by a rich fragrance of rare exotics, and there, languidly stretched on a subtly-devised couch, in the very heart of this chamber of Sybaris, this bower of roses, reclines the youthful hero of the spot, the master of the academic revel, wearied by the nightly dissipation of his extravagant career, surrounded by companions encrowned as to their heads with metaphorical laurel-wreaths and figurative roses, sipping the perfect produce of some priceless vintage. Or we may change the scene and contemplate a different feature in the work of these remarkable sketchers of ordinary Oxford life. If one of this order of novelists has desired to introduce us to the night-side of academic usages, he has given us a meretriciously-graphic painting of what goes on in these several splendid chambers towards the small hours. He has lifted the curtain, and we have gazed upon a youthful band of academic revellers plunging in each maddest excess which their inflamed imagination could conceive. We have been told of flushed faces

and high play; of hair dishevelled, and of prospects ruined; of fearful losings and nefarious winnings. Dark pools of Burgundy have stained the Brussels carpet on the floor; there has been a reckless waste of material, which would have supplied the most elaborate supper; profusion, prodigality, and vice—this has been the trinity of features held up by these annalists of the impossible to our contemplation. Or supposing the ingenious writer has desired, for some reason or other, to contrast this mode of undergraduate life with another species of existence, and to introduce to us the reading man of the period—what a dilapidated picture of studious mortality have we not had! Could we conceive of a more emphatic caution to young men in general not to go and do likewise? Morning, noon, and night this creature is perpetually poring in his cloistered cell over dusty old tomes and recondite treatises, which one enthusiastic lady represents him as having ‘disentombed among the archives of the Bodleian,’ it being one of the rules of the Bodleian Library, by-the-bye, that no volume belonging to it shall be removed from the premises. As for his social traits, how should he have any, seeing that his whole existence is passed exclusively in his own room? He is a youthful anchorite—a complete troglodyte. And what is the pinnacle of ambition which he is allowed to reach? In due time he gains, of course, a double first class—let us remark, *en passant*, that writers of this order always appear to think that a double first makes a man twice as good a classical scholar as a single first, and that nothing more is wanted to confer the dual honour in question save a knowledge of ‘Aristotle’s Ethics’ and other germane subjects standing towards that displayed by less gifted youths in the relation of five to one. He is waited on in the dingy little attic, already referred to, by the members’ whole tutorial staff of the college—which comprises all the fellows, it being a necessary sequence, in the opinion of these novelists, that the fellow should also be a tutor—

one fine morning, who request that henceforward he will become one of themselves, and reap the fruits of the same endowments as those which they enjoy. Immediately he is caught up, as it were, in a cloud, and the episode terminates, for the present, with his apotheosis in the common room, there to make Greek puns, and to endeavour to recruit his nerves, shattered by much study, on the celebrated old college port wine. Probably, however, all the port wine which was ever drunk on a ‘gaudy day’ in the most bibulous of Oxford colleges, would not suffice to repair the ravages which a too lavish consumption of the nightly oil in the past has made upon the studious hero; for the author or authoress, as the case may be, by way of pointing out a melancholy moral to all studiously-disposed youths, generally kills off the newly-made fellow before the curtain falls, and the desperately hard-reading man in the first volume is, in the majority of examples, represented as a corpse in the third. It is only the other day that a novel, in which nearly all these conditions were exactly fulfilled, was written and published, the author being, we believe, or professing to be, a member of one or other of the two great English universities.

Now, stupidly monstrous and unnatural—and we must confess that it was the stupidity of the piece which impressed us infinitely more than a conviction of its tendencies moral or immoral—as Mr. Boucicault’s drama of ‘Formosa,’ which all persons who happen just now to be in London are crowding to see, it is nothing more than a *reductio ad absurdum* of this most vicious habit of misrepresentation of the facts of university life. If Mr. Boucicault has fallen into a few additional absurdities more or less than those ordinarily perpetrated by the writers of such books as ‘Charlie Villars,’ that is simply due to the circumstance that his ignorance has compelled him to draw somewhat more largely upon his imagination. Energetically as Oxford men, young and old, and all who have

the interest of Oxford at heart, ought to protest against Mr. Boucicault's tissue of dramatic monstrosities, as against a series of libels upon the character of undergraduates in general, and the aquatic undergraduates in particular, they are by no means more objectionable than the subtler and less extravagantly-glaring misrepresentation which finds favour with fashionable novelists. Indeed, by reason of this very fact their danger is probably much less. The calumnious caricatures of a playwright who would wish his audience to believe that the university crew is trained by a prizefighter—that its members invariably walk about the streets of London in straw hats and white flannels—that a course of frantic debauchery does not sufficiently interfere with the most rigidly self-denying ordinance of training, to prevent the stroke of the boat doing his work on the day of trial, so as to enable his companions to win the race in admirable style, are not likely to carry with them any large amount of popular conviction. The world has heard too much lately of the abstemious austerity of living to which the selected crews of Harvard and Oxford had to submit before they engaged in the contest of the 27th of last August, to believe that victory on the Thames is compatible with orgies in the Haymarket, and nights spent on the sofas of boudoirs in a cottage *ornée* at Fulham.

It is somewhat surprising, too, that this literary or dramatic passion for investing our academic youth with vices more 'splendid' than, as a class, they ever possessed—for surrounding them with a halo of purely fictitious iniquity—and for portraying them in the gaudy colours of a perfectly spectral mode of life, should still retain any attraction whatever. As we have said, within the last few years the pale of Oxford has become extended to an unprecedented degree. Its mysteries have been not indeed violated—that is not the word—but certainly divulged *sub auriis*. The existence which is passed within those cloistered walls—if there

still lingers around it any charm of romance—has ceased to be anything of a secret: *intus et in cute novimus*; the world knows or might know exactly how the mass of our undergraduates live, and that if their existence is not passed Diogenes-like in tubs, college rooms are yet very far from supplying an adequate reproduction of the social usages of the island of Cyrene. Yet in spite of all this it is not so very long ago that 'tutors of thirty years' standing' seized their pen and wrote to the papers a series of remarkable epistles conveying the surprising intelligence that the great proportion of our lads at Oxford were proceeding to ruin with the utmost rapidity and the most unswerving certainty, by means of that particular avenue of which a green sward, a betting-ring, and a betting-book are the sure symbols; that not merely were these youngsters in the habit of living at a rate which their allowances and the incomes of their fathers failed altogether to justify, but that it was their systematic practice nightly to lose at cards sums which would make respectable gamblers open their eyes; and that throughout the whole of the racing season study was impossible on the banks of the Isis, because the young gentlemen who ought to be busy with their Latin and Greek, were wholly and solely occupied with making up their books for the great events of the year. Indeed, these tutors, who gave us to understand that they were in possession of the accumulated experience of three decades, vouchsafed us intelligence more alarming even than this. It was no such uncommon thing, they positively assured us, for young men, infants and undergraduates, to be either part or entire owners of racehorses—a circumstance which they declared was perfectly well known to the college authorities, yet winked at by them. In fact, these gentlemen, with the air of men who had a great public duty to perform, pretty plainly let us understand that to send a lad to Oxford at the present day was but to put him upon that broad and downward slanting road which

leads to destruction—simply to cut for him the first turf of what Mr. Boucicault, *à propos* to his new play, calls the 'The Railroad to Ruin.'

Presently, however, a fact came out which shed a new light upon the alarming communications of these experienced educationalists. That their remarks should not have been allowed to pass unchallenged, was only natural; that the tutors of thirty years' standing should not have turned round, and endeavoured to vindicate the veracity of their original strictures upon what, by a monstrous abuse of an ancient and classical tongue, they chose to call 'the gambling diathesis,' was perhaps equally natural. In the course of so doing, however, they let escape them an admission which enabled people to account for the surprising statements originally made in an altogether new manner. According to their own confession, the erewhile academical authorities had not the slightest personal experience of Oxford at the present day. Tutors, indeed, of thirty years' standing is just what they were not; that was the extent of their seniority probably as graduates, and according to their own account fifteen or twenty years had elapsed since they were actually engaged in the work of college tuition. They were guilty, in fact, at once of an absurd logical fallacy and a most mischievous moral anachronism. They had proceeded upon the assumption that an order of things which they recollected in their own time to prevail in what were probably only a few isolated instances, must prevail universally in the present day as well—that the social features of Oxford in this current year of grace must be identical with the social features of the Oxford of the past—and that undergraduate extravagance must be in general now precisely what in a few particular instances it once was.

It is thirty years since; and it is precisely because the period which these newspaper correspondents now in view bears that remote date, that their remarks upon Oxford were absolutely worthless, and their much-vaunted experience

altogether irrelevant and inapplicable. It is almost impossible to over-estimate the magnitude and the importance of the change which has come over the social condition—and it is to the social side of Oxford that we shall entirely confine ourselves here—in the course of the last twenty-five, ten, nay, even five years. Very possibly such beautiful glimpses of studious and simple undergraduate life as Sir John Coleridge has given us may not be perfect specimens of the average existence which these young gentlemen actually lead. If the ideal which Wordsworth proposed and which he immortalized in felicitous diction, 'Plain living and high thinking,' be not in both its factors fully realized, there is certainly in the Oxford of the present day an infinitely nearer approach to one of them than there ever was. 'Plain living' is gaining ground, as a principle of daily conduct, rapidly upon the banks of the Isis. Academic extravagance and the superfluities of academic luxury are fast disappearing—swiftly ceasing to be salient characteristics of the place and of its inhabitants. It is important for readers of this article to remember that we are speaking from as close, accurate, and as personal a knowledge of the Oxford of the present day, and of the Oxford of ten years since, as it is perhaps possible to possess. But our object in writing is practical: and being such we can have no reason 'to extenuate, or ought set down in malice.' Let those persons who knew Oxford fifteen years since, or even those who have not been very closely *en rapport* with it during the last four or five years, renew their acquaintance with it now. They will assuredly find that the university revisited is a place wholly changed in a vast multitude of respects from what it once was. Why, for the truth of this remark you need not extend your inquiries beyond the Oxford tradesman. If you put up at the Mitre, as you probably will do—for amid much alteration the comfort of the Mitre as a hostelry remains unaltered—the very waiters,

who will probably recognize your face—the hostess of the Mitre is extremely Conservative in the matter of waiters—will inform you, as they lay your cloth for dinner, or take your orders for breakfast, that things are vastly different from what they once were.

‘The University’s quite changed, sir,’ remarks the trusty William; ‘none of the old lot, sir, up at all: quite a new set of young men,’ and William says these last two words in a somewhat contemptuous tone, that contrasts very much with the ‘gentleman’ of the old days. ‘Can’t understand it at all, sir. As for dinners, we don’t have one where we used to have ten. Hunting! there’s no hunting at all, sir. Strikes me that all the gentlemen of the sort we used to have must go to Cambridge now. Depend upon it, sir, the University’s ruined. What wine will you have, sir?’

And your order given, the faithful William whisks off, leaving you to reflect upon the melancholy fact of the decadence of the academic halls which old association makes you love.

Perhaps you think it well, not that you wish to throw any discredit upon the somewhat sweeping statement, and the Cassandra-like vaticination of the head waiter at the Mitre, somewhat to extend the circle of your investigations and to judge for yourself. Or you may choose, for reasons of your own, to interrogate some of the tradesmen whose imposing windows line the High Street. In the spirit of the thing you find that they one and all tally as accurately as possible with William’s assurance. *Non sumus quales cramus*—that is the one unvarying burthen of the aggregate of their collected replies. The undergraduate you rapidly discover, *vulgaris species*, is not the money-spending, fast-going, devil-may-care young fellow that he once was. The livery-stable keepers tell you that their occupation is nearly gone. Charles Symonds—his name has become historical—shaking his head the while in the Burleigh-like manner peculiar to him so far back as mortal memory can reach, beneath

the arched entrance to his stables in Holywell Street, informs you that ‘Men don’t hunt and can’t ride as they once did.’ All of which intelligence, saddening though it is to these gentlemen themselves, must be welcome enough, you reflect, to the parents who send their sons to Oxford, not to learn how to keep up with hounds, but to pass their examinations, imbibe a certain amount of culture in the course of preparation for their degree, live economically, and quit the University out of debt.

Now all these replies, whether from head waiters or from tradesmen, strike you as most significant, and so assuredly they are most significant. The conclusions which they suggest you find entirely corroborated by the result of inquiries and observations elsewhere. Renew your personal acquaintance with the undergraduate tribe—and as the undergraduate still retains his hospitable instincts, though on a somewhat limited scale, you will have no difficulty in doing this—and you will speedily and inevitably notice the prevalence of a very different régime from that which existed in the days of the Consulship of Planctus. There is no doubt about the youngsters having become ten times more quiet and studious than you knew them once to be. The conviction on their parts that a certain amount of reading really ought to be done before lunch, has decidedly gained ground. It is generally acknowledged that unlimited billiards is a bad thing. It is universally admitted that a man ought not to get plucked if he can get through, and that it is well to stretch a point, and not quit the University without having taken honours in at least one of the schools. Hot luncheons, you notice—fearfully seductive allurements to systematic idleness—have almost entirely gone out. As for suppers, those most fatal snares of profuse academic expenditure in the days gone by, are hardly ever heard of. There is no demand for matutinal soda water, as in the days of Mr. Verdant Green. College quads have ceased to resound with dis-

cordant melodies at night. To cut a lecture is quite exceptional. As for stealthy expeditions to town, they are very seldom carried out. Van John and Loo, you find, are by no means the institutions that they once were; and as for the 'gambling diathesis,' about the only noticeable signs of it are quiet whist at fourpenny points. If men get proctorized for appearing after dusk in non-academical costume, they don't turn round and tell that official that if he will call in on them to-morrow he will find some devilled anchovies at lunch, and a hand at *écarté*; they merely apologise, and go home to their colleges trembling and quaking at the thought of the morrow's interview.

No doubt instances occasionally there are when this even tenor of average undergraduate virtue is broken by the revelation of some abnormal undergraduate deflection from the straight path of propriety. Some one or other 'runs a mucker,' gets into debt, gets rusticated, and finally has to be taken away by the father whom he has almost ruined, and whose heart he has almost broken. But the doctrine of averages is of universal application, and if you would form a fair estimate you must argue from the practices of a majority, not of a distinct minority. Now the picture which we have drawn of the modern undergraduate, of his way of thinking and his way of living, is perfectly accurate. No doubt this young gentleman is occasionally priggish and conceited, full of insufferable airs, and imperatively requiring the wholesome discipline of a punctual course of snubbing. In the main, however, the undergraduate of the present day is a very promising specimen of a healthy young Englishman. He is manly and courageous. Athletic sports flourish with unabated vigour at Oxford, and find with the Oxford undergraduate as much popularity as they ever did. The lad is as good a cricketer as ever, and the art of that fatally long workman-like stroke, which seems destined to win Oxford an interminable series of victories on the river, has by no

means been lost. The only thing is that upon the manly materials and prowess of the Oxford undergraduate have been very generally grafted new habits of economy and study. We absolutely search in vain, in the majority of Oxford colleges, to discover the existence of the rowing rowdy sets which once gave them their tone.

Now how has all this change in the current practices of the University—and a change undoubtedly of great magnitude it is—been accomplished? We believe that there are certain obvious circumstances to which it may be referred. In the first place, within the last few years a very remarkable alteration has taken place in the *personnel* of the undergraduate body. The number of those who are the sons of parents of position and of wealth, are not now, as they once were, in a majority, but in a distinct minority; and it is the majority which will naturally give the tone to the community. The number of open scholarships and the energetic measures which the various college authorities have taken to put down all superfluous expenses—resulting in the most veritable minimizing of the necessary costs of a university career—have placed a university education within the reach of an immense class to whom it was formerly denied. Now we must say frankly that we entertain no particular affection to the unattached student scheme; but we must say, with equal frankness, that there are certain unquestionable benefits which, directly or indirectly, it has been instrumental in producing. It is a manifestation of precisely the same spirit as that which has brought about the measure to which we have alluded that induced, in the first place, the colleges to reduce their tariffs; and it was the rivalry which the unattached scheme has practically constituted which compelled them to reduce these charges still more. To make Oxford perfectly national, all that was required was to make it reasonably economical. This has now been done, and the consequence is that, seeing the number of college scholarships

and school exhibitions which have ceased to be close, and invite the most catholic sort of competition, Oxford is accessible to every lad in the land whom it is likely to benefit.

This is saying much, but it is not saying too much. If the necessary social expenses of Oxford have been diminished to a minimum, so, too, have the equally necessary expenses of tuition and education. It must be remembered that the old generation of don—the old race of college tutor—who went through their lectures anyhow, and cared nothing how it was conducted, so long as they got it over, has completely died out. That was an order of things under which it was impossible for a student to pass successfully and honourably his examination without securing special private assistance in his studies. Then a private tutor—and the expense which a private tutor involved was heavy—was a necessity. Now we have a new tribe of college fellows and tutors—young men who are up to their work, and who are energetic in their execution of it—who spare no pains so long as their duty is done, and who will devote any time that the industrious undergraduate likes to ask of them to private supervision of his work. College lectures may once have been a sham, they are now a reality. The college tutor may at one time too often have been a man whose main object was to shirk his work; now he is a man whose one object it is to perform that work honestly and efficiently. Parents often ask to know how is it that I have to pay for a private tutor for my son? We will tell them how it is. It is by no means too much to say that the only instances in which, in all the best colleges at Oxford, private tuition is necessary, are those of exceptional and abnormal crassness or unmitigated indolence. If a lad is the victim of the former, he never ought to have been sent to Oxford at all; if of the latter, he has no right to be kept there.

But this is not the only step which the college authorities of Oxford have recently taken towards

an economical reform. If they have almost wholly enabled the student to dispense with the necessity of private tuition, they have also enabled him to dispense with the necessity of going outside his college walls for the purchase of certain articles which he could previously only procure at shops. For the wares of grocery, &c., the colleges have themselves opened their own emporia. That the movement is very much the reverse of popular with the town is scarcely to be wondered at; and we may remark that we are not entirely convinced as to the prudence or necessity of the step. The sole cause which has compelled the tradesmen of Oxford to charge higher prices for their goods than those which the colleges charge under the new order of things, has been the long-credit system. Once have this abolished, and there is not a tradesman in Oxford dealing in such commodities who would not gladly consent to supply undergraduates with the articles that they now purchase of their colleges at precisely the same price. We make these remarks because it is of the utmost importance that between the University and the town a good understanding should exist. If, however, by the plan which they have adopted the college authorities should have dealt the first real blow at the long-credit system, they will have been instrumental in conferring a benefit upon all Oxford undergraduates and the parents of all Oxford undergraduates which it is impossible to exaggerate.

We have sufficiently exemplified the change which has taken place at Oxford, and have given what appear to us the main causes of that change. Briefly to summarize, what we have said comes to this: the days of Oxford as an aristocratic institution are over, consequently the vices of Oxford as such have disappeared; hence the alarm which parents are apt to feel at first sending their son 'to study learning on the Isis' is mainly groundless. Oxford is rapidly becoming essentially middle-class—middle-class in all her social ideas, and middle-class

in most of her views of life. She possesses, and will henceforward possess, the faults and the excellences of a middle-class institution; and the faults of a middle-class institution are not those on which fashionable writers and ignorant playwrights dwell. We say nothing as to our opinion on the entire desirability of the change: we only chronicle it as a fact. Five years ago a great middle-class college in Oxford, such as that which Queen's, for instance, has become, would have been an impossibility. But we have Queen's, and we know that the impossibility is a fact. What the pious Eaglesfield would have said, could he have witnessed the respectable assemblage of middle-class youths who congregate in the hall for their daily dinner is another question. We must accept circumstances as they are; and from its senior tutor down to its freshest freshman Queen's is the centre and

shrine of everything which is middle-class. Now, we believe that Queen's may be taken as a fair type of the tone which the whole university a few years hence will assume. And yet there are persons who profess surprise that the political opinions of resident Oxford are Liberal.

We should have been glad to have said something on the subject of the intellectual aspect of Oxford—its features and its pitfalls. But this is scarcely the place. Scepticism, if scepticism there be, is but a transient phase, not a permanent condition, and herein many anxious parents may take refuge. What we have mainly wished to do here, is to point out the absurdity, the misrepresentations of the Oxford of to-day—to demolish the *idola* which may or must prevail in the popular mind concerning her, and to show the social condition of the University, not as it was, but as it is.

CORSETS AND CORPULENCE.

WHOEVER frequents the places where ladies congregate—*'spectatum veniunt, veniunt spectentur ut ipse'*—must have been struck with the revival of two old fashions which philosophers supposed a few years ago that they had exploded for ever. Most of us have read or heard denunciations of 'tight lacing,' and how it is said to cause consumption, and crookedness, and 'all manner of diseases; and that walking on high heels produces another set of ailments of only inferior degree. Nevertheless mankind persist in recurring to the old admiration of slender figures, and in considering no part of the female form more attractive than a pair of well-shaped feet walking steadily and well on high heels tapering nearly to a point—perhaps because none but very well-made feet can do so. We only wonder how any ladies can be misled into defacing the beautiful outline of a good foot by rosettes and buckles and heavy-looking shoes, instead of the neat and smooth leather boot, which sets off the foot

and ankle as nothing else ever did, especially in these days of short dresses, which ladies with good feet are quite right in using. And though some excessively high heels are both objectionable and ugly, there is no doubt that shoes without raised heels tend to produce the 'flat feet' with turned-up toes for which waiters at hotels are notorious, and to which deformity women are more liable than men.

Of that we have no more to say; but that invisible article of dress, which is called by its enemies an instrument of torture, while the martyrs themselves declare that they enjoy it, has a long and curious history of its own, on which whole books have been written in various languages, from England to Ceylon. Last year added another, called 'The Corset and the Crinoline,' by W. B. L., besides a multitude of letters, and not from ladies only, in some of the periodicals designed for their edification. Some of these statements, both as to the old history and modern experience on the sub-

jeet, are so remarkable that we think a short summary of them may be interesting to our readers.

Premising therefore that we do not at all vouch for their accuracy, we may say that the cultivation of small waists begins with the gods; for Homer makes Juno put on a golden girdle when she dressed herself to charm Jupiter into granting her a favour; and no more charming girdle for a small and round waist, but not for a large one, has ever been invented than that flat metal band which some of our Junos have been wearing lately. The *costus* of Venus, which Juno borrowed at the same time, was more probably a decorated stomacher, though some commentators take that to have been a waistband also. Homer frequently applies to his terrestrial beauties the epithet 'well-girdled;' and the term 'wasp-waisted' is as old as the Greek comedian Aristophanes, who uses it rather as a compliment (Plutus 557). Terence (Eun. ii. i. 25) describes the Roman girls as laced tightly by their mothers, and having their shoulders strapped back, to make them slender and upright, and admired by the other sex; and other Latin poets allude to the same thing. In Ceylon there are said to be books which prescribe the measure of the female span, or from fourteen to fifteen inches, as the proper size for the waist; and there is a picture in the 'Corset and Crinoline' of a Persian dancing girl with a figure that might be envied in Belgravia. Circassian women are said to wear, both day and night, a severe-looking corset made of wood and leather; and we are told by another writer that the corsets of Western Europe have lately been adopted with great satisfaction by the Turkish ladies. We must say, however, that W. B. L.'s description of the Circassian ladies' tight-lacing is very different from the older account of their dress in 'Curzon's Monasteries of the Levant.' On the other hand, Mr. Curzon describes some Albanian young men whom he met with, as being as active as cats, and with waists not much more than eighteen inches

round, and from their white dresses and short petticoats and slender waists, looking like young ladies escaped from the Opera.

After the dark ages certain tight and stiff garments called *colles hardies* reappeared in France in the ninth century, and before 1043 tight lacing had become common enough in this country to be caricatured by a picture of a female demon in tight stays like our present ones, except that they are laced in front, as they were generally until quite modern times. The two queens of Henry I., one from Scotland and the other from France, and a daughter of Edward III., seem to have been eminent tight-lacers. In various early poems, English and Scotch and French women are described as 'laced small, jollyf, and well,' 'with middles small as wands,' and 'weasles,' and so forth, and their pictures for several centuries agree with those descriptions. Indeed it would be difficult to find in the poetry of any age, from Homer down to the present time, any admiration of thick-waisted women, or any epithets of praise applied to their figures but those which imply slenderness, and, in short, what has been always understood by the terms 'a good figure' or 'a fine shape.' Even the writers who formally denounce corsets occasionally express an unguarded admiration of figures which cannot possibly exist without them. As soon as they 'have reason to believe that no injurious force has been employed to create that slender compass' (Mr. Trollope says of Ophelia Gledd, the belle of Boston), the instinctive admiration of a small and 'well-girdled' waist overpowers philosophy and comes out. In an old French book, quoted in Fosbrooke's 'Antiquities,' it is said to be the duty of a *femme de chambre* to be tight-laced herself, as well as to perform that operation on her mistress. Catherine de Medici, who had been an Italian beauty in her youth, invented a most formidable corset made of crossed steel bars, in which the ladies of her court, and other courts of Europe, were contracted into the almost incredible circumference of thirteen inches, or

very little more than four inches in diameter. But as thirteen French inches were nearly equal to fourteen English, probably that was only equivalent to requiring that they should be able to span their own waists; which was equally the fashion with our Puritan young ladies of the next century, as it had been in the time of Queen Elizabeth and her successor, when it seems that the most tremendous constriction in the stiffest stays was practised by both sexes, and high heels first came into fashion.

Those Puritan damsels, of whom a contemporary writer said, 'they never think themselves small enough unless they can span their waists,' evidently meant to compensate for the enforced plainness of their dress by the attractiveness of their figures. For whether the maxim of 'figure before face,' lately quoted in the 'Times,' is true or not, 'figure before dress' is much more of an axiom than ladies of the period seem to understand. They do not seem to be aware that extravagant costumes excite little admiration, and some horror at the idea of paying for them, in the eyes of men, which may be always seen to follow magnetically a well-laced and upright figure in the plainest dress and with the plainest face, either on horseback or on foot, especially if the foot itself adds to the attraction.

The ladies of the Restoration were as loose in their dress as in their morals; and we have heard of girls of another period who may be called both 'fast and loose.' But soon after the Revolution the empire of the corset was restored in full vigour. Congreve, who flourished at the close of that century, writes of

'The Mulibers who forge those stays of steel,
Which arm Aurelia with a shape to kill;'

not meaning the Medicean steel corsets, which had then gone out of fashion, but stays of the usual materials stiffened with numerous steel ribs. Prior's well-known lines are of the same period:

'No longer shall the boddies aptly laced,
From thy full bosom to thy slender waist,
That air and harmony of shape express,
Fine by degrees and beautifully less?'

In Queen Anne's time, and during a great part of the eighteenth century, the ladies of Europe were compressed in stays of stiff leather into such excessive smallness, that they were said to resemble the letter V in outline, as indeed their pictures indicate; for unless the smallness of their waists was exaggerated by the painters, some of them were less than four inches wide, or about eleven inches round; but that is hardly conceivable. About the time of the French Revolution the so-called classical costumes flourished for a time, with hideously impossible waists close under the arms; but these soon disappeared, and in the first half of this century no possible waist, in the natural and proper place for it, was thought too small. Ladies were again represented in their portraits with waists not much thicker than their necks, and in caricatures of the fashions they are almost insects. A writer in 1810, whose father had been rejoicing over the decline and fall of the corset a few years before, says that the fashion had returned with unexampled fury, and that the ladies were making up for lost time and figures by being laced till the laces broke in stays stiffened with steel bars three inches wide, and that the measure of the span was re-established. The women of the New World have rather surpassed those of the Old in slinness: it seems the smallest waists there are called 'illusions.' Among the European nations it appears that Austria has long had the pre-eminence in the cultivation of the figure, and that the Viennese corsets are famous for their elegance, and the present Empress for her figure, which the Empress of the French never was; if she had been, the fashion would probably not have declined, as it has done in her time. Some Swiss ladies also have wonderfully small waists.

As we mentioned the corset-wearing of gentlemen of the sixteenth century, we must add that the feeling against it does appear to be entirely modern and confined to this country. Fosbrooke says (p. 606) that the young men among the

Gauls were fined if their girdles exceeded a certain size, and that ancient British soldiers wore iron belts to keep themselves thin. Mediæval pictures, in Froissart and other books, give young men, and especially soldiers, excessively small waists, sometimes absolutely smaller than the women; and some old suits of armour and sepulchral monuments have a circumference which would surprise a military tailor now, though not those of thirty years ago. Shakspeare makes Falstaff say, that 'when he was young he was like an eagle's talon in the waist.' The small bronze figure of a smart young man of unknown date, which was engraved in this magazine last April, had a waist of quite feminine size. The names of some distinguished persons are given who made no secret of being always tightly laced; and, in short, there is abundant evidence, in pictures and caricatures, in humorous writings of various kinds, in the tailors' fashion-prints, and advertisements of corsets for gentlemen, and within our recollection, in the shape of the gentlemen themselves who aimed at a good figure, that they regularly submitted to the discipline of the corset, even after they had become shy of admitting the impeachment. Fairholt says, in 1846, that 'this disgraceful practice' had continued from the middle ages till the present time. It probably came to be thought disgraceful from the effeminate habits of the dandies of the last century, which were often caricatured. On the other hand, we have heard a saying of 'the Duke's' quoted, that the dandies made the best officers. And Dr. Doran says that Gustavus Adolphus encouraged his officers to dress well, and that they became conspicuous for their tight-laced and slender figures.

We all know that an extremely loose style of dressing came into fashion about twenty years ago, which has already disappeared. But if the books and letters we have referred to are to be trusted, it has long been and still is the custom in some foreign schools to put boys into stays like girls, whether they like it or not. There is an amus-

ing letter in the 'Corset and Crinoline,' from an Englishman who was sent to such a school in Austria, and vainly resisted that treatment at first; but soon learnt, like all his schoolfellows, to enjoy being laced as tight as possible, and has continued it ever since, though he rather conceals than displays the effect of it. Several others have written to the same effect, and say that the practice of wearing, not merely narrow belts but 'regular stays, strongly boned, steeled, and laced,' made by the ladies' stay-makers, is rapidly increasing again among young men, and that they find it so pleasant, as well as beneficial to their health, that they would on no account give it up. On that point we shall quote another letter presently. We do not find any definite standard of size mentioned for gentlemen, like the span for ladies. We are surprised that W. B. L. did not ascertain from the records of military tailors, or some other source, whether the dandies of the Georgian era ever attained the dimensions of Mr. Curzon's Albanians. If pictures can be trusted they must have nearly done so, both in this century and in old times.

But we have to notice the still more surprising statements lately published as to the effects of the most prodigious contraction, from ladies of all ages, married and single, mothers and daughters, schoolmistresses and their former pupils, and the husbands and fathers and uncles of others who have been so treated, compulsorily or voluntarily. They declare that they were gradually reduced from their natural circumference, some of them while young, and others after they were full grown, to sixteen, fifteen, fourteen, and two of them to thirteen inches, without the least injury to their health, or any inconvenience or pain, except a little at first, in a few cases where it was begun late. But in one case, where it was done too violently, and so as to cause great pain for several months, the health of the patient evidently did suffer, as she admits that she feels languid, having formerly been strong and robust. One

of them, a married woman, explains that her undressed size remains twenty-three inches, but that she is contracted about into sixteen when dressed, so that her husband can span her waist though she can not. They all say too that the best health prevails in large schools, both in this country and in others, where the girls are regularly reduced to the smallest size they can bear; and in some cases no relaxation is allowed even at night, an old French practice which is said to be peculiarly effective, and even that is not complained of by those who have submitted to it. But the most surprising thing of all is that these ladies, one after another, and we must add gentlemen too, declare that after a little discomfort and occasional superficial pain at first, the internal sensation of the tightest lacing in the stiffest stays is delightful and 'superb.'

We do not profess either to answer or explain these statements, which would be incredible if they were not so numerous, but simply to give an impartial summary of them; and we have not been able to find a single letter on the other side from any one who alleges that she had actually suffered from such treatment in her youth, or had given it up as soon as she was at liberty to do so, though several of them repeat once more the often-repeated arguments and medical denunciations of tight-lacing. It is said moreover, that if the corsets of the Georgian era were injurious, those of the Victorian are not, because they are now made easy at the top, so as to expand rather than contract the chest. Accordingly some French and English physicians are quoted as recanting the old condemnation of tight stays, and even recommending them, for preventing corpulence, improving the figure, and promoting uprightness, for which purposes it is said by the experienced that the front plate or busk cannot be too stiff, and that stiff stays tightly laced sometimes cure indigestion. Indeed we do not see what harm can be done by mere stiffness, though it is often mentioned as an aggravation of the wickedness of tight

stays that they have so many bones in them: the bones (as far as we can see) only prevent the material from creasing or bending in upon the body, which must be disagreeable, and may easily be injurious; and indeed it is positively said by some of the writers to cause indigestion, while stiff stays cure it. The 'front-fastening' corsets, which were welcomed by young ladies a few years ago as equivalent to 'five minutes more in bed,' are now condemned by the tight lacers as a weak invention, inconsistent with preserving due rigidity in front. And some ladies secure themselves against exceeding their proper circumference by always wearing a band of strong tape of that length, fastened with hooks and eyes, over their lacing.

In Fairholt's 'Costumes' we are told that in the time of George III. girls used to be made upright by having long needles fixed to the top of their stays under their chin, and most of us have heard of backboards and other contrivances for the same purpose, which is now more pleasantly accomplished by shoulder-straps, pulling the shoulders backwards, not attempting to pull them down, which only pulls the stays up above the proper and natural place of the waist, which is immediately above the hips. Therefore short and small waists must be injurious. Uprightness is said to be attained still better and more easily by neck-straps, which are simply a thin leather strap, faced with ribbon for appearance, passing over the neck and buckled to the stays behind. There is no doubt that the best figure would be spoiled by stooping and round shoulders, which also have an appearance of weakness and bad health. For this reason a riding-master says that he encourages his pupils to wear very stiff and tight stays; and it must be confessed that some of the best riders and most active walkers possess figures which are quite unattainable without the help of steel and whalebone and the staylace.

Whatever view may be taken of the cultivation of small waists for the sake of appearance or fashion,

the prevention of corpulence, which is now recognized as a kind of disease, and at least a serious inconvenience, is a very practical question. And on this point we are able to add some information to that already published from a gentleman whom we know to have tried the experiment. He writes as follows:—'I have no objection to your publishing the results of my experience in the art of getting thin. I need not tell you that I was never remarkable for my attention to dress and appearance; but having been of active habits I found my weight increasing to an inconvenient degree. I tried the usual remedies of 'Banting' as far as it agreed with me, and wearing a belt; but they were only partially successful, and the belt uncomfortable after a few hours. I had the common prejudice against wearing laced stays, and an impression that any compression of the ribs must be injurious. But after reading of their merits I thought it foolish to be deterred from trying them by a mere prejudice, and the result has been most satisfactory. My weight is reduced to what it was ten years ago; my digestion is improved, and the greatest compression that can be borne, instead of being painful or disagreeable, is extremely pleasant. It is not even necessary to wear them all day provided you are laced as tight as possible the first thing in the morning, when they are much more effective than if put on after breakfast. About an hour after breakfast, I agree with other writers on the subject, that one can always tighten them still more with comfort. But of course the extreme of tightness requires a little relaxation for dinner. I must add my testimony to that which you will, no doubt, quote from the 'Corset and Crinoline,' as to the value of nocturnal compression in reducing the size. Disagreeable as it sounds, and feels at first, I was surprised to find that it soon becomes rather agreeable than otherwise. It certainly makes a material difference in the size you can bear after washing and relacing in the morning, and is sometimes also beneficial to digestion. Although the exhibition

of a good figure is no object of mine, I cannot help seeing the advantage of stays to those who consider their appearance, in improving the figure and carriage and the fitting of the dress, especially if they have the least tendency to corpulence.

'I find the best material for male corsets is well-dressed leather blocked or stretched when wet and soft upon a pair of wooden blocks twelve or thirteen inches high, by the method well known to curriers. The blocks must be prepared by those who know the proper shape. I believe it would answer to any ingenious corset-maker to take up and advertise the manufacture, as many gentlemen would wear them who for various reasons will not wear stays like those of ladies. The great advantage is that leather keeps quite clean when worn next the skin, and is remarkably pleasant to wear, and so the corset is concealed without any further trouble. It may either be stiffened with crinoline steel, or be thick enough to require no stiffening, except of course the steel plate in front, which cannot be too stiff. It is most convenient to make them lace in front, as lacing tight behind without assistance is by no means easy. They are laced with strong whipcord over a separate piece of stiff leather, about sixteen inches long and six inches wide, with the steel plate attached to it by a thinner piece of leather. As your shape and size alter, the leather can be cut and new holes punched, and the blocks must be altered. I cannot say that this plan will answer in all cases of incipient corpulence, but it is certainly worth trying. All the doctors in England, with 'Punch' to help them, will not now convince me that it is injurious; because I know for a fact that it does not produce the effects which they think it ought to do; and so, it seems, does every one who has fairly tried the experiment for a month.'

A retired corset-maker says in a letter to the 'Englishwoman's Magazine,' July 1868, that she constantly made stays for gentlemen, and that many patients had been sent to her

by physicians, and that she could give some astonishing instances of reduction of size and improvement of figure, both in young and adult persons, by judicious lacing, and had never known any harm done by it: with much more to the same effect both from her and other writers.

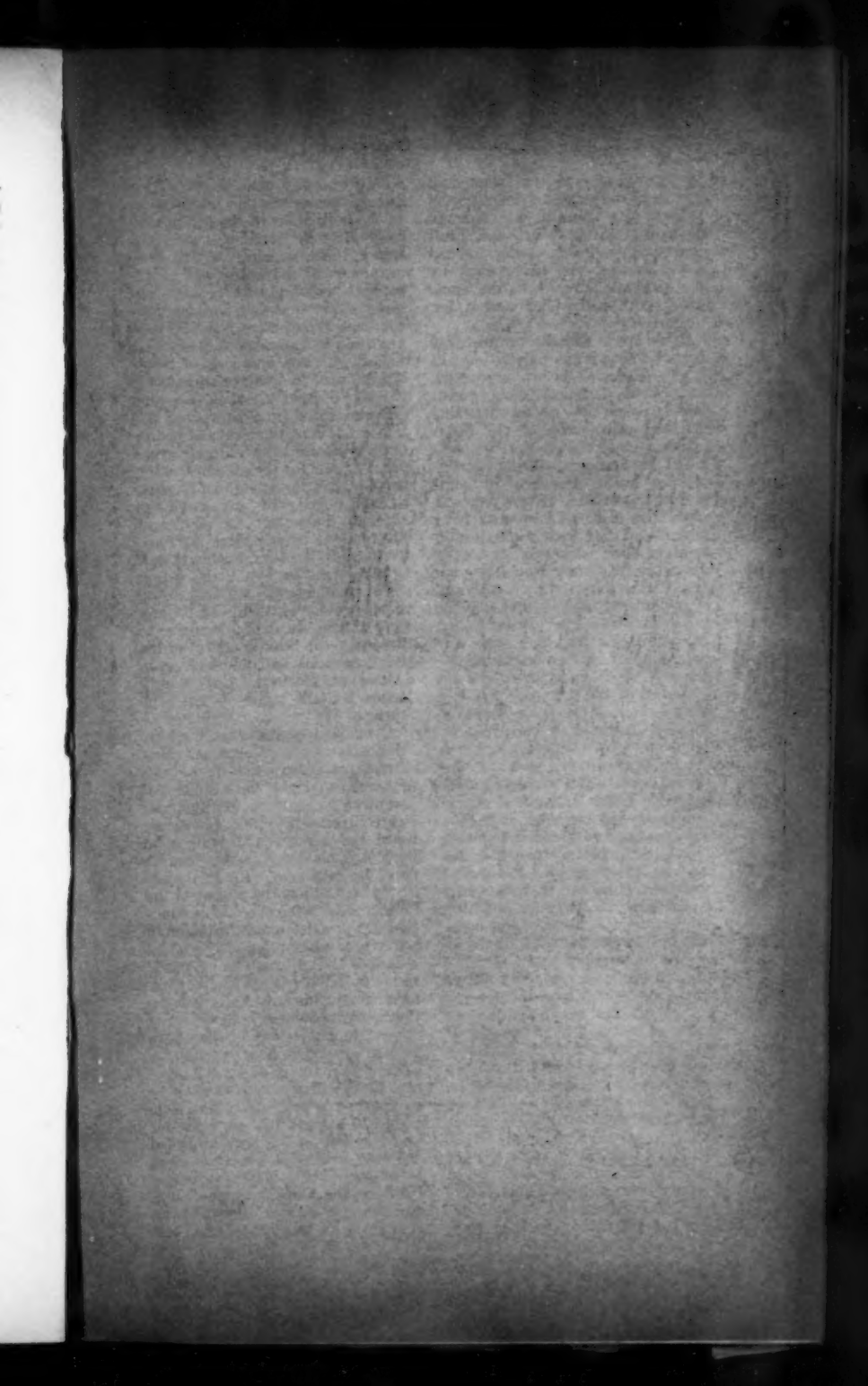
If we are to add any commentary upon all this, it can only be as follows:—Every *à priori* argument, and all the medical dicta (until lately), seem to be against this artificial contraction of the body. But we must confess that we have failed in finding anything worthy to be called evidence in support of those dicta. Every now and then it is clear that women have fainted and died from some sudden exertion, such as running up stairs, but more frequently from eating too much, when very tightly laced; and it is perfectly evident that any one *might* be laced to death in ten minutes. But that is a long way from supporting the sweeping statements that 'thousands of women have died of this fashion,' or that it is injurious, even in moderation. What is moderation can only be determined by every one's experience. Pleasure and pain are established by nature as very safe guides for bodily treatment; not of course momentary pleasure or pain, like that of eating and drinking, or losing a bad tooth, but permanent. No one who is unprejudiced by medical theories can believe that Nature is so deceitful as to make anything feel permanently pleasant and beneficial while one's health is being secretly undermined by it.

It is useless to say, as some of their opponents do, that these witnesses to the pleasure and advantages of contraction 'are the most foolish of their sex.' They cannot all be so foolish as to mistake pain for pleasure and bad health for good. Moreover, the foolish and the wise alike have had to submit to this discipline, and some of them confess that they disliked it very much at first, though they now enjoy it. We never heard of the victims of tight boots asserting that the sensation became delightful; and if they did, their walk

would speedily belie them. Comparing the contraction of the waist to the mutilation of the feet of Chinese girls by binding their toes under them, which is a favourite argument of the anti-corset philosophers, is simply an absurd begging of the question whether corsets are injurious. Neither is it anything to the purpose to say that ladies will run the risk of being either burnt to death or starved for the sake of fashion. Risk is a very different thing from pain; and it is impossible that thousands of people in all ages can have willingly spent years in pain for the sake of looking thinner than their neighbours. And though nobody of any sense can advocate the violent contraction of waists from twenty-three to fourteen inches, it is impossible that, if so many persons have lived within that circumference without being the worse for it, there can be any danger in a waist of seventeen to those who can bear it easily, seeing that it contains half as much again as one of fourteen; and twenty inches contain twice as much as fourteen.

A medical correspondent of the 'Englishwoman's Magazine,' May 1868, expressly says that some ladies of average height have waists of seventeen inches without any material compression; and we have heard the same even of ladies who have had children: but such cases must be very rare. He also practically contradicts the theory of the 'Lancet' as to the effect of contraction of the waist upon the action of the lungs and diaphragm.

Indeed the editor of the 'Lancet' seems to have been altogether unfortunate in his recent attack upon this reviving fashion. He does not appear to know that his own profession are no longer unanimous against it. He is evidently ignorant that modern stays are made so as not to contract the chest, but rather to expand it. He took no notice whatever of the published evidence which he was challenged to answer by the lady who boldly took up the cudgels against him. He charged corsets with causing stooping, and was immediately met





Drawn by H. Paterson.]

WHO COMES HERE?

[See the Verses.]



Drawn by H. Deane.

WHO COMES HERE?

By the Author.

with the reply that the only ones which do so are 'those with weak steels in front, for which we are indebted to the doctors.' And he thought it a smart answer to say that murder and robbery and drunkenness have been in fashion as long as tight lacing; which only proved that he had no real answer to give to the argument that this practice (to which there is no self-evident temptation as there is to drinking, &c.) could not have so constantly revived after all its apparent extinctions in every civilised nation for a thousand years, unless it satisfied some natural taste and had some practical advantage.

It is easy for a medical practitioner or editor to appear sagacious by attributing every sudden

death or unknown ailment of a small-waisted patient to her stays, while he disposes of the multitude of others who persist in having good health by predicting that they will suffer some day. But this kind of argument is not calculated to convince those who prefer believing in experience, nor to satisfy those who want to see some solid and practical answer (if there is one) to the facts which have been published. And therefore we must conclude by saying that if the 'Lancet' and its followers do not produce such an answer, they are in danger of being ingloriously defeated by those who may be, for aught we know, 'the most foolish of both sexes.'

WHO COMES HERE?

A Mystery.

WHO comes here

To startle the deer,
That fly down the sunny glade,
Where Maud and May
Are met to-day
For a chat in the dappled shade?

What Maud and May
Have got to say
I cannot pretend to tell;
Nor why they creep
Where the shadows sleep
In the heart of a body doll!

But I incline
The cause to assign
To a mischievous, winged lad,
Who troubles hearts
With smarts and darts,—
Whose conduct is very bad!

For Maud, you see,
It seems to me,
Has a letter to read to May;
And May's imprest
With interest
In a sweet sympathetic way!

And when you see
Two damsels agree,
You may swear, by Queen Venus's
doves,
The secret tether,
That binds them together,
Is a little affair of loves!

Who comes here,
The dears and the deer
Surprising and startling thus?
Whoe'er he may be,
He's not, you see,
Revealed to unlucky us!

A milking-lass
Perchance may pass—
Or a lad from the cattle-run—
The woodman bold,
Or the shepherd old,
Or the keeper with ready gun!

'Who comes here?'
I'm not quite clear,
And the artist won't let us see,
But I should not feel
Of surprise a deal
If the maidens confessed 'twas
HE!



M. OR N.

‘*Similia similibus curantur.*’

By G. J. WHYTE-MELVILLE,

AUTHOR OF ‘DIGBY GRAND,’ ‘CERISE,’ ‘THE GLADIATORS,’ ETC.

CHAPTER XXVII.

BLINDED.



See p. 335.

TOM RYFE, walking down Berners Street in the worst of humours, saw the whole game he had been playing slipping out of his hands. If there were to be no duel, all the trouble he had taken went for nothing; and even should there be an unseemly *fracas*, and should a meeting afterwards take place between Lord Bearwarden and Dick Stanmore, what good would it do him, if her ladyship's name were kept out of the quarrel? How he

cursed this cockney painter's resolution and good sense! How he longed for some fierce encounter, some desperate measure, something, no matter what, that should bring affairs to a crisis! It seemed so silly, so childlike, to be baffled now. Yes, he had set his heart on Lady Bearwarden. The great master-passion of his life had gone on gathering and growing till it became, as such master-passions will, when there is neither honour nor religion

to check them, a fury, over which he had lost all control. And he felt that, having gone so far, there was no crime, no outrage, he would shrink from committing, to obtain what he desired now.

When a man is thus ripe for evil he seldom wants opportunity. It must be admitted the devil never throws a chance away. Open your hand, and ere you can close it again he slips a tool in, expressly adapted for the purpose you design—a tool that, before you have done with it, you may be sure, will cut your own fingers to the bone.

'Beg pardon, sir, can I speak to you for a minute?' said a gaudily-dressed, vulgar-looking personage, crossing the street to accost Tom Ryfe as he emerged from the painter's house. 'It's about a lady. About her ladyship, askin' your pardon. Lady Bearwarden, you know.'

That name was a talisman to arrest Tom's attention. He looked his man over from head to foot, and thought he had never seen a more ruffianly bearing, a wilder, sadder face.

'Come up this bye-street,' said he. 'Speak out—I'll keep your counsel, and I'll pay you well. That's what you mean, I suppose. That's business. What about Lady Bearwarden?'

The man cursed her deeply, bitterly, ere he replied—'I know you, sir, an' so I ought to, though you don't know me. Mr. Ryfe, I seen you in Belgrave Square, along of her. You was a courtin' of her then. You owes her more than one good turn now, or I'm mistaken!'

'Who the devil are you?' asked Tom, startled, and with reason; yet conscious, in his dark, dreary despair, of a vague glimmer, bearing the same relation to hope that a will-o'-the-wisp does to the light on our hearth at home.

The man looked about him. That narrow street was deserted but for themselves.

He stared in Tom's face with a certain desperate frankness. 'I'll tell ye who I am,' said he; 'if you an' me is to go in for this job, as true pals, let's have no secrets between

us, an' bear no malice. They call me "Gentleman Jim," Mr. Ryfe, that's what they call me. I'm the man that hoccussed you that there arternoon, down Westminster way. I was set on to that job, I was. Set on by her. I squeezed hard, I know. All in the way o' business. But I might have squeezed harder, Mr. Ryfe. You should think o' that!'

'You infernal scoundrel!' exclaimed Tom, yet in a tone neither so astonished nor so indignant as his informant expected. 'If you had, you'd have been hanged for murder. Well, it's not you I ought to blame. What have you got to say? You can help me—I see it in your face. Out with it. You speak to a man as desperate as yourself.'

'I knowed it!' exclaimed the other. 'When you come out o' that there house, I seen it in the way as you slammed to that there door. Says I, there's the man as I wants an' the man as wants me! I follered you this mornin' from your hotel, an' a precious job I had keepin' up with your hansom, though the driver, as works by times with a pal o' mine, he kep' on easy when he could. I watched of the house, ah! an hour an' more, an' I never turned my head away but to get a drop o' beer from a lad as I sent round to the Grapes for a quart. Bless yo! I hadn't but just emptied the pot, when I see a lady—the very moral of her as we knows on—pops round the corner into Oxford Street. I was in two minds whether to foller, but thinks I, it's Mr. Ryfe as I'm a-lookin' for, an' if it *was* she, we couldn't trap her now, not in a crowded place like that. Besides, I see a servant-gal takin' home the beer drop her a cursey as she went by. No, it couldn't be my lady; but if so be as you an' me is of the same mind, Mr. Ryfe, my lady shall be safe in a cage afore this time to-morrow, and never a man to keep the key but yourself, Mr. Ryfe, if you'll only be guided by a true friend.'

'Who set you on to this?' asked Tom, coolly enough, considering that his blood was boiling with all the worst and fiercest passions of his nature. 'What do you expect

to gain from injury inflicted on '(he could not get the name out)—' on the lady you mention?"

Jim laughed—a harsh, grating laugh.

"You're a deep 'un, Mr. Ryfe!" he answered. "I won't deceive you. I put this here in your way because there's two things as I must have to work the job as I ain't got. One's money, and t'other's gumption. I ain't rich enough, an' I ain't hartful enough. I owe my lady a turn, too, never you mind what for, and strike me dead but I'll pay it up! I ain't a-going to say as I wouldn't ha' worked this here off, clear, single-handed, if I'd had the chance. I'm not telling you a lie, Mr. Ryfe; you and me can do it together, an' I'll only charge you fair and reasonable. Ah! not half what you'd take an' offer this minute if I was to stand out for a price."

Tom Ryfe turned round, put both hands on the other's shoulders, and laughed too.

"We understand each other," said he. "Never mind the price. If the work's done to please me, I'm not likely to grudge the money. You've some plan in your head by which you think we can both gain what we most desire. I know you're a resolute fellow. Hang it! my throat's still sore where you got that cursed grip of yours inside my collar. You can believe I am not easily thwarted, or I should hardly be here now. Explain yourself. Let me know your plan. If it is anything like practicable, you and I ought to be able to carry it out."

Then Jim, not without circumlocution and many hideous oaths, detailed in his hearer's willing ears the scheme he had in view. He proposed, with Mr. Ryfe's assistance, to accomplish no less flagrant an outrage than the forcible abduction of Lady Bearwarden from her home. He suggested that his listener, of whose skill in penmanship he entertained a high opinion, should write such a letter as might lure her ladyship into a lonely, ill-lighted locality, not far from her own door; and Tom, appreciating the anxiety she must now feel about her husband's movements, saw no difficulty

in the accomplishment of such a stratagem. This desperate couple were then to be ready with a four-wheeled cab, a shawl, and a cleverly-constructed gag, in which screaming was impossible. Tom should enact the part of driver, while Jim, being the stronger man of the two, should seize and pinion her ladyship in his grasp. Mute and muffled, she was to be forced into the cab, which could then be driven off to that very lodging in the purlieus of Westminster which Tom knew, by his own experiences, was far removed from assistance or inquiry. Once in Mr. Ryfe's hands, Jim observed, the captive would only be too glad to make terms, and arrangements for taking her out of London, down the river or in any other direction, could be entered into at leisure. Mr. Ryfe surely would not require more than twelve hours to come to an understanding with a lady irrevocably in his power. And all the while, deep in this bold villain's breast lurked a dark, fierce, terrible reflection that one more crime, only one more—almost, indeed, an act of wild retributive justice on his confederate—and that proud, tameless woman would be crouching in the dust, praying for mercy at the feet of the desperate man she had reviled and despised.

Gentleman Jim, maddened by a course of dram-drinking, blinded by an infatuation that itself constituted insanity, was hardly to be considered an accountable being. It may be that under the mass of guilt and impurity with which his whole being was loaded, there glimmered some faint spark of manlier and worthier feeling; it may be, that he entertained some vague notion of appearing before the high-born lady in the light of a preserver, with the blood of the smoother and more polished scoundrel on his hands, and of setting her free, while he declared his hopeless, his unalterable devotion, sealed by the sacrifice of two lives: for, as he often expressed it in imaginary conversations with his idol, "he asked no better than to swing for her sake."

Who knows? Fanaticism has its martyrs, like religion. It is not only

the savage heathen who run under Juggernaut every day. Diseased brains, corrupt hearts, and impossible desires go far to constitute aberration of intellect. Unreasoning love, and unlimited liquor, will make a man fool enough for anything.

Tom Ryfe listened well pleased. For him there was neither the excuse of drink nor despair, yet he, too, entertained some notion of home and happiness hereafter, when she found nobody in the world to turn to but himself, and had forgiven him her wrongs because of the tenacity with which he clung to her in spite of all.

Of his friend, and the position he must leave him in, he made no account.

Something very disagreeable came across him, indeed, when he thought of Lord Bearwarden's resolute character—his practical notions regarding the redress of injury or insult; but all such apprehensions were for the future. The present must be a time of action. If only to-night's *coup de main* should come off successfully, he might cross the Atlantic with his prey, and remain in safe seclusion till the outrage had been so far forgotten by the public that those at home whom it most affected would be unwilling to rekindle the embers of a scandal half-smothered and dying out. Tom Ryfe was not without ready money. He calculated he could live for at least a year in some foreign clime, far beyond the western wave, luxuriously enough. A year! With *her*! Why it seemed an eternity; and even in that moment his companion was wondering, half-stupidly, how Mr. Ryfe would look with his throat cut, or his head laid open, weltering in blood; and when and where it would be advisable to put this finishing stroke of murder and perfidy to the crimes he meditated to-night.

Ere these confederates parted, however, two letters had to be written in a stationer's shop. They were directed by the same pen, though apparently in different hand-writings, to Lord and Lady Bearwarden at their respective addresses.

The first was as follows:—

'DEAR LORD BEARWARDEN,—

'They won't fight! All sorts of difficulties have been made, and even if we can obtain a meeting at last, it must be after considerable delay. In the mean time I have business of my own which forces me to leave town for four-and-twenty hours at least. If possible, I will look you up before I start. If not, send a line to the office. I shall find it on my return: these matters complicate themselves as they go on, but I still venture to hope you may leave the conduct of the present affair with perfect safety in my hands, and I remain, with much sympathy,

'Your lordship's obedient
servant,

'THOMAS RYFE.'

The second, though a very short production, took longer time, both in composition and penmanship. It was written purposely on a scrap of paper from which the stationer's name and the water-mark had been carefully torn off. It consisted but of these lines.

'A cruel mystery has deprived you of your husband. You have courage. Walk out to - night at eight, fifty yards from your own door. Turn to the right—I will meet you and explain all.

'My reputation is at stake. I trust you as one woman trusts another. Seek to learn no more.'

'That will bring her,' thought Tom, 'for she fears nothing!' and he sealed the letter with a dab of black wax, flattened by the impression of the woman's thumb who kept the shop.

There was a Court Guide on the counter. Tom Ryfe knew Lady Bearwarden's address as well as his own, yet from a methodical and lawyer-like habit of accuracy, seeing that it lay open at the letter B, he glanced his eye, and ran his finger down the page to stop at the very bottom, and thus verify, as it were, his own recollection of his lordship's number, ere he paid for the paper and walked away to post his letters in company with Jim, who waited outside.

The stationer, sitting shelves in

his back shop, was a man of observation and some eccentricity.

'Poll,' said he to his wife, 'it's an uncertain business, is the book-trade. A Court Guide hasn't been asked for over that counter, no, not for six months, and here's two parties come in and look at in a morning. There's nothing goes off, to depend on, but hymns. Both of 'em wanted the same address, I do believe, for I took notice each stopped in the same column at the very foot. Nothing escapes me, lass! However, that isn't no business of yours nor mine.'

The wife, a woman of few words and abrupt demeanour, made a pounce at the Court Guide to put it back in its place, but her 'master,' as she somewhat inconsequently called him, interposed.

'Let it be, lass!' said he. 'There's luck in odd numbers, they say. Who knows but we mayn't have a third party come in on the same errand? Let it be, and go make the toast. It's getting on for tea-time, and the fire in the back parlour's nearly out.'

When these letters were posted, the confederates, feeling themselves fairly embarked on their joint scheme, separated to advance each his own share of the contemplated enormity. Tom Ryfe jumped into a cab, and was off on a multiplicity of errands, while Jim, pondering deeply with his head down, and his hands thrust into his coat pockets, slunk towards Holborn, revolving in his mind the least he could offer some dissipated cabman, whose license was in danger at any rate, for the hire of horse and vehicle during the ensuing night.

Feeling his sleeve plucked feebly from behind, he broke off these meditations, to turn round with a savage oath.

What a dreary face was that which met his eye! Pale and gaunt, with the hollow eyes that denote bodily suffering, and the deep cruel lines that speak of mental care. What a thin wasted hand was laid on his burly arm, in its velvet sleeve; and what a weak faint voice in trembling accents, urged its sad, wistful prayer.

'Speak to me, Jim—won't you speak to me, dear? I've looked for you day and night, and followed you mile after mile, till I'm ready to lie down and die here on the cold stones.'

'Bother!' replied Jim, shaking himself free. 'I'm busy, I tell ye. What call had you, I should like to know, to be tracking, and hunting of me about, as if I was a—well—a fancy dog we'll say, as had strayed out of a parlour? Go home, I tell ye, or it'll be the worse for ye!'

'You don't love me no more, Jim!' said the woman. There was a calm sadness in her voice speaking of that resignation which is but the apathy of despair.

'Well—I don't. There!' replied Jim, acceding to this proposition with great promptitude.

'But you can't keep me off of loving you, Jim,' she replied, with a wild stare; 'nobody can't keep me off of that. Won't ye think better of it, old man? Give us one chance more, that's a good chap. It's for dear life I'm askin'!'

She had wound both hands round his arm, and was hanging to it with all her weight. How light a burthen it seemed, to which those limp rags clung so shabbily, compared with the substantial frame he remembered in former days, when Dorothea was honest, hardworking, and happy.

'It ain't o' no use tryin' on of these here games,' said he, unclasping the poor weak hands with brutal force. 'Come! I can't stop all day. Shut up, I tell ye! You'll wish you had by-and-by.'

'Oh! Jim,' she pleaded. 'Is it come to this? Never say it, dear. If you and me is to part in anger now, we'll not meet again. Leastways, not on this earth. And if it's true, as I was taught at Sunday-school, heaven's too good a place for us!'

'Go to h—ll!' exclaimed the ruffian, furiously; and he flung her from him with a force that would have brought her to the ground had she not caught at the street railings for support.

She moaned, and sat down on a doorstep, a few paces off, without looking up.

For a moment Jim's heart smote him, and he thought to turn back, but in his maddened brain there rose a vision of the pale, haughty face, the queenly bearing, the commanding gestures that bade him kneel to worship, and with another oath — remorseless, pitiless, untouched and unrepentant — he passed on to his iniquity.

Dorothea sat with head bent down, and hands clasped about her knees, unconscious, as it seemed, of all the world outside. The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and who shall say what expiation she may not have made for sin in that dull trance of pain which took no note of circumstance, kept no count of time?

Ere long, a policeman, good-humoured but imperative, touched her on the shoulder, and bade her 'move on.'

The face that looked up to him puzzled this functionary extremely. The woman was sober enough, he could see, and yet there seemed something queer about her, uncommon queer: he was blessed if he knew what to make of her, and he had been a goodish time in the force, too!

She thanked him very quietly. She had been taking a rest, she said, thinking no harm, for she was tired, and now she would go home. Yes, she was dead-tired, she had better go home!

Wrapping her faded shawl about her, she glided on, instinctively avoiding the jostling of foot passengers and the trampling of horses, proceeding at an even, leisurely pace, with something of the sleep-walker's wandering step and gestures. The roll of wheels came dull and muffled on her ear: those were phantoms surely, those meaningless faces that met her in the street, not living men and women, and yet she had a distinct perception of an apple-woman's stall, of some sham jewellery she saw in a shop-window. She was near turning back then, but it didn't seem worth while, and it was less trouble to plod stupidly on, always westward, always towards the setting sun!

Without knowing how she got

there, presently she felt tufts of grass beneath her feet dank with dew, growing greener and coarser under large towering elms. Oh! she knew an elm-tree well enough! She was country bred, she was, and could milk a cow long ago.

It wasn't Kensington Gardens, was it? She didn't remember whether she'd ever been here before or not. She'd heard of the place, of course; indeed Jim had promised to take her there some Sunday. Then she shivered from head to foot, and wrapped her shawl tight round her as she walked on.

What was that shining far-off between the trees, cool, and quiet, and bright, like heaven? Could it be the water? That was what had brought her, to be sure. She remembered all about it now, and hurried forward with quick, irregular steps, causing her breath to come thick, and her heart to beat with sudden choking throbs.

She pulled at her collar, and undid its fastenings. She took her bonnet off and swung it in her hand. The soiled tawdry ribbon had been given her by Jim, long ago. Was it long ago? She couldn't tell, and what did it matter? She wouldn't have looked twice at it a while back. She might kiss and cuddle it now, if she'd a mind.

What a long way off that water seemed! Not there yet, and she had been walking—walking like the wayfarer she remembered to have read of in the 'Pilgrim's Progress.' All in a moment, with a flash, as it were, of its own light, there it lay glistening at her feet. Another step and she would have been in head foremost! There was time enough. How cool and quiet it looked! She sat down on the brink and wondered why she was born!

Would Jim feel it very much? Ah! they'd none of them care for him like she used. He'd find that out at last. How could he? How *could* he? She'd given him fair warning!

She'd do it now. This moment, while she'd a mind to it. Afraid! Why should she be afraid? Better than the gin-palace! Better than

the workhouse! Better than the cold, cruel streets! She couldn't be worse off anywhere than here! Once! Twice!

Her head swam. She was rising to her feet, when a light touch rested on her shoulder, and the sweetest voice that had ever sounded in poor Dorothea's ears, whispered softly, 'You are ill, my good woman. Don't sit here on the damp grass. Come home with me.'

What did it mean? Was it over? Could this be one of the angels, and had she got to heaven after all? No; there were the trees, the grass, the distant roar of the city, and the peaceful water—fair, smooth, serene, like the face of a friend.

She burst into a fit of hysterical weeping, cowering under that kindly touch as if it had been a mountain to crush her, rocking herself to and fro, sobbing out wildly, 'I wish I was dead! I wish I was dead!'

CHAPTER XXVIII.

BEAT.

Like a disturbed spirit Lady Bearwarden wandered about in the fever of a sorrow, so keen that her whole soul would sometimes rise in rebellion against the unaccustomed pain. There was something stifling to her senses in the fact of remaining between the four walls of a house. She panted for air, motion, freedom, and betook herself to Kensington Gardens, partly because that beautiful retreat lay within an easy walk of her house, partly perhaps, that for her, as for many of us, it had been brightened by a certain transient and delusive light which turns everything to gold while it lasts, leaves everything but a dull dim copper when it has passed away.

It was a benevolent and merciful restriction, no doubt, that debarred our first parents from re-entering the paradise they had forfeited. Better far to carry away unsullied and unfaded the sweet sad memories of the Happy Land, than revisit it to find weeds grown rank, fountains

dry, the skies darkened, the song of birds hushed, its bloom faded off the flower, and its glory departed from the day.

She used to sit here in the shade with *him*. There was the very tree. Even the broken chair they had laughed at was not mended, and yet for her a century ago could not have seemed a more hopeless past. Other springs would bloom with coming years, other summers glow, and she could not doubt that many another worshipper would kneel humbly and gratefully at her shrine, but their votive garlands could never more glisten with the fresh dew of morning; the fumes from their lower altars, though they might lull the sense and intoxicate the brain, could never thrill like that earlier incense, with subtle sudden poison to her heart.

To be sure, on more than one occasion she had walked here with Dick Stanmore too. It was but human nature, I suppose, that she should have looked on that gentleman's grievances from a totally different point of view. It couldn't be half so bad in his case, she argued, men had so many resources, so many distractions. She was sorry for him, of course, but he couldn't be expected to feel a disappointment of this nature like a woman, and, after all, theirs was more a flirtation than an attachment. He need not have minded it so very much, and had probably fancied he cared a great deal more than he really did.

It is thus we are all prone to reason, gauging the tide of each other's feelings by the ebb and flow of our own.

Love, diffused amongst the species, is the best and purest of earthly motives, concentrated on the individual it seems but a dual selfishness after all.

There were few occupants of the Gardens; here two or three nursery-maids and children, there a foreign gentleman reading a newspaper. Occasionally, in some sequestered nook, an umbrella, springing up unnecessarily and defiantly like a toadstool, above two male legs and a muslin skirt. Lady Bearwarden





SAVED!

...wept (up for company.)

[See 'M. or M.]

passed on, with a haughty step and a bitter smile.

There's something of immensity in sorrow. Dorothea's vague abstracted gait arrested Maud's attention even from a distance, and involuntarily the delicate lady followed on the track of that limp shabby figure with which she had but this one unconscious link of a common sorrow, an aching heart.

Approaching nearer, she watched the poor sufferer with a sympathy that soon grew to interest and even alarm.

While Dorothea sat huddled down by the water's edge, her belated eyes looked round in vain for a policeman or a park-keeper, holding herself in readiness to prevent the horror she already anticipated, and which drove clear off her mind every thought of her own sorrows and despondency. There was no time to lose; when the despairing woman half rose to her feet, Lady Bearwarden interposed, calm, collected, and commanding in the courage which had hitherto never failed her in an emergency.

"That sound of hysterical tears, that despairing cry, 'I wish I was dead,' told her for the present Dorothea was saved. She sat down on the grass in the sun. She took the poor woman's hand in her own. She sat her down, laid her on her lap, and with gentle, loving phrases, such as soothe a suffering child, encouraged the helpless wretch to weep and sob her fill.

She could have wept too for sympathy, because of the load that seemed lifted in an instant from her own breast; but this was a time for action, and at such a season it was no part of Maud's nature to sit down and cry.

It was long ere the muddled heart and changed brain had relieved themselves sufficiently for apprehension and intelligible speech. Dorothea's first impulse, on coming to herself, was to smooth her unwrinkled hair and apologise for the disorder of her costume.

"Never mind your dress," said Lady Bearwarden, reassured, now the crisis was past, her habitual air of authority, conscious that it would

be every attention under the circumstances. "This wet shawl will do you good. Let your hair cool and rest. And the policeman that I looked up on approaching, on that hill somewhere, I've just sent to the police, and he will come back with you."

"Oh, dear, thank you," Dorothea murmured, looking up with some awe at the woman, who had so calmly and so gently spoken.

"His hat is gone," she said, as she took up the shawl. "If you only needed what I gave" then, either her eyes to her effect, but, a pang, keener than all previous reflections, went through her woman's heart like the thrust of a knife. It all came on her at once. "This beautiful being, clad in shining robes, who had saved and comforted her like an angel from heaven, was the pale girl Jim had gone to that in her stately, luxurious home, when she followed him up for through those weary streets to the night of the thunderstorm."

She could hear no more. Her physical system gave way, just as it was that her sustained exertion after crash fell with the low and effulgent glow. She sat still, her eyes closed, with long gasps above her head, and with a faint trembling, very weak, shivering, and shivering, as if from cold, and a shivering, as if from cold.

Her condition, that she took of her, a man, began to speak to her, the presence of her. As the policeman volunteered to take a cab. Amongst them they supported Dorothea to the gate and placed her in the vehicle. The park-keeper touched her hat, the clergy gentleman made a bow, and an army of his assistance went on, followed, when Maud, without and supporting his charge, told her driver what to do. As they passed each other away from the gate, a gentleman, curiously, perceived the woman's condition to require the return of this beautiful creature. "The girl and mother, at once, to recover the fellow and also to bring the policeman." The policeman took his hat off, bowed to her, and put it on again.



THE VIRGIN MARY
BY MICHELANGELO

PLATE 10

passed on, with a haughty step and a bitter smile.

There is something of freemasonry in sorrow. Dorothea's vague abstracted gait arrested Maud's attention even from a distance, and involuntarily the delicate lady followed on the track of that limp shabby figure with which she had but this one unconscious link, of a common sorrow, an aching heart.

Approaching nearer, she watched the poor sufferer with a curiosity that soon grew to interest and even alarm.

While Dorothea sat herself down by the water's edge, her ladyship looked round in vain for a policeman or a park-keeper, holding herself in readiness to prevent the horror she already anticipated, and which drove clear off her mind every thought of her own regrets and despondency. There was no time to lose; when the despairing woman half rose to her feet, Lady Bearwarden interposed, calm, collected, and commanding in the courage which had hitherto never failed her in an emergency.

That burst of hysterical tears, that despairing cry, 'I wish I was dead!' told her for the present Dorothea was saved. She sat down on the grass by her side. She took the poor coarse hands in her own. She laid the drooping head on her lap, and with gentle, loving phrases, such as soothe a suffering child, encouraged the helpless wretch to weep and sob her fill.

She could have wept too for company, because of the load that seemed lifted in an instant from her own breast; but this was a time for action, and at such a season it was no part of Maud's nature to sit down and cry.

It was long ere the numbed heart and charged brain had relieved themselves sufficiently for apprehension and intelligible speech. Dorothea's first impulse, on coming to herself, was to smooth her unkempt hair and apologise for the disorder of her costume.

'Never mind your dress,' said Lady Bearwarden, resuming, now the crisis was past, her habitual air of authority, conscious that it would

be most efficacious under the circumstances. 'You are tired and exhausted. You must have food and rest. I ask no questions, and I listen to no explanations, at least till to-morrow. Can you walk to the gate? You must come home with me?'

'Oh, Miss! Oh, my lady!' stammered poor Dorothea, quite overcome by such unlikely sympathy, such unexpected succour.

'It's too much! It's too much! I'm not fit for it! If you only knowed what I am!' then, lifting her eyes to the other's face, a pang, keener than all previous sufferings, went through her woman's heart like the thrust of a knife. It all came on her at once. This beautiful being, clad in shining raiment, who had saved and soothed her like an angel from heaven, was the pale girl Jim had gone to visit in her stately, luxurious home, when she followed him so far through those weary streets on the night of the thunderstorm.

She could bear no more. Her physical system gave way, just as a tree that has sustained crash after crash falls with the last well-directed blow. She rolled her eyes, lifted both bare arms above her head, and with a faint despairing cry, went down at Lady Bearwarden's feet, motionless and helpless as the dead.

But assistance was at hand at last. A park-keeper helped to raise the prostrate figure. An elderly gentleman volunteered to fetch a cab. Amongst them they supported Dorothea to the gate and placed her in the vehicle. The park-keeper touched his hat, the elderly gentleman made a profusion of bows and as many offers of assistance which were declined, while Maud, soothing and supporting her charge, told the driver where to stop. As they jingled and rattled away from the gate, a pardonable curiosity prompted the elderly gentleman to inquire the name of this beautiful Samaritan, clad in silks and satins, so ready to succour the fallen and give shelter to the homeless. The park-keeper took his hat off, looked in the crown, and put it on again.

'I see her once afore under them trees,' he said, 'with a gentleman. I see a many and I don't often take notice. But she's a rare sort she is! and as good as she is good-looking. I wish you a good evening, sir.'

Then he retired into his cabin and ruminated on this 'precious start,' as he called it, during his tea.

Meantime Maud took her charge home, and would fain have put her to bed. For this sanatory measure, however, Dorothea, who had recovered consciousness, seemed to entertain an unaccountable repugnance. She consented, indeed, to lie down for an hour or two, but could not conceal a wild, restless anxiety to depart as soon as possible. Something more than the obvious astonishment of the servants, something more than the incongruity of the situation, seemed prompting her to leave Lady Bearwarden's house without delay, and fly from the presence of almost the first friend she had ever known in her life.

When the bustle and excitement consequent on this little adventure had subsided, her ladyship found herself once more face to face with her own sorrow, and the despondency she had shaken off during a time of action gathered again all the blacker and heavier round her heart. She was glad to find distraction in the arrival of a nameless visitor, announced by the most pompous of footmen as 'a young person desirous of waiting on her ladyship.'

'Show her up,' said Lady Bearwarden; and for the first time in their lives the two sisters stood face to face.

Each started, as if she had come suddenly on her own reflection in a mirror. During a few seconds both looked stupefied, bewildered. Lady Bearwarden spoke first.

'You wish to see me, I believe. A sick person has just been brought into the house, and we are rather in confusion. I fear you have been kept waiting.'

'I called while your ladyship was out,' answered Nina. 'So I walked about till I thought you must have

come home again. You've never seen me before—I didn't even know where you lived—I found your address in the "Court Guide"—Oh! I can't say it properly, but I did so want to speak to you. I hope I haven't done anything rude or wrong.'

There was no mistaking the refinement of Nina's voice and manner.

Lady Bearwarden recognized one of her own station at a glance. And this girl so like herself—how beautiful she was! How beautiful they both were!

'What can I do for you?' said her ladyship, very kindly. 'Sit down; I am sure you must be tired.'

But Nina had too much of her sister's character to feel tired when there was a purpose to carry out. The girl stood erect and looked full in her ladyship's face. All unconscious of their relationship, the likeness between them was at this moment so striking as to be ludicrous.

'I have come on a strange errand, Lady Bearwarden,' said Nina, hardening her heart for the impending effort—'I have come to tell a truth and to put a question. I suppose, even now, you have some regard for your husband?'

Lady Bearwarden started. 'What do you know about my husband?' she asked, turning very pale.

'That he is in danger,' was the answer, in a voice of such preternatural fortitude as promised a speedy breakdown. 'That he is going to fight a duel—and it's about you—with—with Mr. Stanmore! Oh! Lady Bearwarden, how could you? You'd everything in the world, everything to make a woman good and happy, and now, see what you've done!'

Tears and choking sobs were coming thick, but she kept them back.

'What do you mean?' exclaimed Maud, trembling in every limb, for through the dark midnight of her misery she began to see gleams of a coming dawn.

'I mean *this*,' answered Nina, steadying herself bravely. 'Lord Bearwarden has found everything out. He has sent a challenge to

Mr. Stanmore. I—I—care for Mr. Stanmore, Lady Bearwarden—at least, I *did*. I was engaged to him.' (Here, notwithstanding the tumult of her feelings, a little twinge crossed Lady Bearwarden to learn how quickly Dick had consoled himself.) 'I'm only a girl, but I know these things *can* be prevented, and that's why I'm here now. You've done the mischief; you are bound to repair it; and I have a right to come to you for help.'

'But I haven't done anything!' pleaded Maud, in far humbler tones than she habitually used. 'I love my husband very dearly, and I've not set eyes on Mr. Stanmore but once since I married, in Oxford Street, looking into a shop-window, and directly he caught sight of me he got out of the way as if I had the plague! There's some mistake. Not a minute should be lost in setting it right. I wonder what we ought to do!'

'And—and you're not in love with Mr. Stanmore? and he isn't going to run away with you? Lady Bearwarden, are you quite sure? And I don't deserve to be so happy. I judged him so harshly, so unkindly. What will he think of me when he knows it? He'll never speak to me again.'

Then the tears came in good earnest, and presently Miss Algeron grew more composed, giving her hostess an account of herself, her prospects, her Putney home, and the person she most depended on in the world to get them all out of their present difficulty, Simon Perkins, the painter.

'I know he can stop it,' pursued Nina, eagerly, 'and he will too. He told the other man nothing should be done in a hurry. I heard him say so, for I listened, Lady Bearwarden, I *did*. And I would again if I had the same reason. Wouldn't *you*? I hope the other man will be hanged. He seemed to want them so to kill each other. Don't you think he can be punished? For it's murder, you know, *really*, after all.'

Without entering into the vexed question of duelling—a practice for which each lady in her heart enter-

tained a secret respect—the sisters consulted long and earnestly on the best method of preventing a conflict that should endanger the two lives now dearer to them than ever.

They drank tea over it, we may be sure, and in the course of that refreshment could not fail to observe how the gloves they laid aside were the same number (six and three-quarters, if you would like to know)—how their hands were precisely similar in shape—how the turn of their arms and wrists corresponded as closely as the tone of their voices. Each thought she liked the other better than any one she had ever met of her own sex.

After a long debate it was decided that Nina should return at once to her Putney home, doubtless ere now much disturbed at her prolonged absence; that she should have full powers to inform Simon of all the confidences regarding her husband Lady Bearwarden had poured in her ear; should authorise him to seek his lordship out and tell him the whole truth on his wife's behalf; also, finally, for women rarely neglect the worship of Nemesis, that after a general reconciliation had been effected, measures should be taken for bringing to condign punishment the false friend who had been at such pains to foment hostilities between the men they both loved.

Lady Bearwarden had her hand on the bell to order the carriage for her visitor, but the latter would not hear of it.

'I can get a cab every twenty yards in this part of the town,' said Nina. 'I shall be home in three-quarters of an hour. It's hardly dark yet, and I'm quite used to going about by myself. I'm not at all a coward, Lady Bearwarden, but my aunts would be horribly alarmed if one of your smart carriages drove up to the gate. Besides, I don't believe it could turn round in the lane. No; I won't even have a servant, thanks. I'll put my bonnet on and start at once, please. You've been very kind to me, and I'm so much obliged. Good-night!'

CHAPTER XXIX.

NIGHT-HAWKS.

Lord Bearwarden's groom of the chambers, a person by no means deficient in self-confidence, owned that he was mystified. Amongst all the domestic dissensions with which his situation had made him familiar, he could recall nothing like his present experience. This bringing home of a shabby woman out of the street, and ordering the best bedroom for her reception; this visit of a beautiful young person so exactly resembling his mistress that, but for the evidence of his own senses, when he brought in tea and found them together, he could have sworn it was her ladyship; this general confusion of household arrangements, and culpable indifference to the important ceremony of dinner, forced him to admit that he was in a position of which he had no preconceived idea, and from which he doubted whether he could extricate himself with the dignity essential to his office.

Returning to his own department, and glancing at the letter-box in the hall, he reflected with satisfaction how his professional duties had been scrupulously fulfilled, and how, in accordance with his misconception of Lord Bearwarden's orders, every packet that reached the house had been forwarded to its master without delay.

Hence it came to pass that the vexed and angry husband received in due course of post a letter which puzzled him exceedingly.

He had only just digested Tom Ryfe's unwelcome missive, announcing somewhat vaguely that the revenge for which he panted must be delayed two or three days at least, and had cursed, energetically enough, his own friend's mismanagement of the affair, with the scruples entertained by the other side, when a fresh budget was placed in his hands, and he opened the envelopes as people often do, without looking at their addresses: thus it fell out, that he read the anonymous letter directed to his wife, asking for a meeting that same night, in the vicinity of his own house.

'A cruel mystery has deprived you of your husband.' What could it mean? He studied the brief communication very attentively, particularly that first line. And a vague hope rose in his loving, generous heart, that he might have judged her too harshly after all. It was but the faintest spark, yet he tried hard to kindle it into flame. The wariest rogue is never armed on 'all sides. He is sure to forget some trifling precaution, that, left unguarded, is like the chink in a shutter to let in the light of day. Lord Bearwarden recognized the same hand that had penned the anonymous letter he received on guard—this argued a plot of some sort. He resolved to sift the matter thoroughly, and instead of forwarding so mysterious a request to his wife, repair to the indicated spot in person, and there by threats, bribery, compulsion, any or all means in his power, arrive at a true solution of the mystery.

It was a welcome distraction, too, this new idea, with which to while away the weary interminable day. It seemed well perhaps, after all, that the duel had been postponed. He might learn something to-night that would change the whole current of his actions; if not, let Mr. Stanmore look to himself!

That gentleman, in the mean time, had completely forgotten Lord Bearwarden's existence—had forgotten Mr. Ryfe's visit the night before at his club, the unintelligible quarrel, the proposed meeting, everything but that Nina was lost. Lost! a stray lamb, helpless in the streets of London! His blood ran cold to think of it. He hastened down to Putney, and indeed only knew that he had made so sure of finding her there, by his disappointment to learn she had not returned home. It made his task no easier that Aunt Susannah was in the garden when he reached the house, and he had to dissemble his alarm in presence of that weak-minded and affectionate spinster. 'He was passing by,' he said, 'on his way to town, and only looked in, (he couldn't stay a moment) to know if they had any message to—'

to their nephew. He was going straight from here to the painting-room.'

'How considerate!' said Aunt Susannah; not without reason, for it was but this morning they parted with Simon, and they expected him back to dinner! 'We have a few autumn flowers left. I'll just run in, and get the scissors to make up a nosegay. It won't take ten minutes. Oh! nothing like ten minutes! You can give it to poor Simon with our dear love. He's so fond of flowers! and Nina too. But perhaps you know Nina's tastes as well as we do, and indeed I think they're very creditable to her, and she's not at all a bad judge!'

Then the good lady, shaking her grey curls, smiled and looked knowing, while Dick cursed her below his breath, for a grinning old idiot, and glared wildly about him, like a beast in a trap seeking some way of escape. It was provoking, no doubt, to be kept talking platitudes to a silly old woman in the garden, while every moment drifted his heart's treasure further and further into the uncertainty he scarcely dared to contemplate.

Some women are totally deficient in the essentially feminine quality of tact. Aunt Susannah, with a pocket-handkerchief tied round her head, might have stood drivelling nonsense to her visitor for an hour, and never found out that he wanted to get away. Fortunately, she went indoors for her scissors, and Dick, regardless of the proprieties, made his escape forthwith, thus avoiding also the ignominy of carrying back to London a nosegay as big as a chimney-sweep's on May-day.

Hastening to the painting-room, his worst fears were realized. Nina had not returned. Simon, too, began to share his alarm, and not without considerable misgivings did the two men hold counsel on their future movements.

It occurred to them at this juncture, that the maid-of-all-work below stairs might possibly impart some information as to the exact time when the young lady left the house. They rang for that domestic accordingly, and bewildered her

with a variety of questions in vain.

Had she seen Miss Algernon during the morning? She was to think, and take time, and answer without being frightened.

'Miss Algernon! Lor! that was her as come here most days, along o' him,' with a backward nod at Dick. 'No—she hadn't a-seen her to-day, she was sure. Not *particler* that was. Not more nor any other day.'

'Had she seen her at all?'

'Oh, yes! she'd seen her at all. In course you know, she couldn't be off of seeing her at all!'

'When did she see her?'

'When? oh! last week, every day a'-most. And the week afore that too! She wasn't a-goin' to tell a lie!'

'Then she hadn't seen her this morning?'

'Yes, she'd seen her this morning. When she come in, you know, along o' the other gentleman.' Here a dive of the shock head at Simon, and symptoms of approaching emotion.

'Why, you said you hadn't at first!' exclaimed Dick, perplexed and provoked.

Forthwith a burst of sobs and tears.

'Compose yourself, my good girl,' said the painter, kindly. 'We don't want to hurry nor confuse you. We are in great distress ourselves. Miss Algernon went out, we believe, to take a walk. She has not returned here, nor gone home. It would help us very much if we knew the exact time at which she left the house, or could find anybody who saw her after she went away.'

If you want a woman to help you, even a maid-of-all-work, tell her your whole story and make no half-confidences. The drudge brightened up through her tears, and assumed a look of intelligence at once.

'Lor!' said she, 'why didn't ye say so? In course I see the young lady, as I was a-fetchin' in the dinner beer. She'd a-got her bonnet on, I took notice, and was may-be goin' for a walk, or to get a few odds and ends, or such like.'

Here a full stop with a curtsy. The men looked at each other and waited.

'She went into a shop round the corner, for I seen her myself. A stationer's shop it were. An' I come home, then, with the beer, an' shut to the door, an' I couldn't tell you no more, no, not if you was to take and kill me dead this very minute!'

Stronger symptoms of agitation now appearing, Simon thought well to dismiss this incoherent witness, and proceed at once to the stationer's shop in quest of further intelligence. Its proprietor was ready to furnish all the information in his power.

'Had a lady answering their description been in his shop?' 'Well, a great many ladies come backwards and forwards, you know. Trade wasn't very brisk just now, but there was always something doing in the fancy stationery line. It was a light business, and most of his customers were females. His "missis" didn't take much notice, but he happened to be something of a physiognomist himself, and a face never escaped him. A very beautiful young lady, was it? Tall, pale, with dark eyes and hair. Certainly, no doubt, that must be the party. Stepped in about dinner-time; seemed anxious and in a hurry, as you might say; didn't take any order from her,—the young lady only asked as a favour to look into their "Court Guide." There it lay, just as she left it. Singular enough, another party had come in afterwards to write a letter, and took the same address he believed, right at the foot of the column; these were trifles, but it was his way to notice trifles. He was a scientific man, to a certain extent, and in science, as they probably knew, there were no such things as trifles. He remembered a curious story of Sir Isaac Newton. But perhaps the gentlemen were in a hurry.'

The gentlemen *were* in a hurry. Dick Stanmore, with characteristic impetuosity, had plunged at the 'Court Guide,' to scan the page at which it lay open with eager eyes. At

the foot of the column said this man of science. To be sure, there it was, Barsac, Barwise, Barzillai, Bearwarden—the very last name in the page. And yet what could Nina want at Lord Bearwarden's house? Of all places in London why should she go there? Nevertheless, in such a hopeless search, the vaguest hint was welcome, the faintest clue must be followed out. So the two men, standing in earnest colloquy under the gas-lamps, resolved to hunt their trail as far as Lord Bearwarden's residence without further delay.

The more precious are the moments, the faster they seem to pass. An autumn day had long given place to night ere they verified this last piece of intelligence, and acquired some definite aim for their exertions; but neither liked to compare notes with the other, nor express his own disheartening reflection that Nina might be wandering so late, bewildered, lonely, and unprotected through the labyrinths of the great city.

In the mean time Gentleman Jim and his confederate were fully occupied with the details necessary to carry their infamous plot into execution. The lawyer had drawn out from the bank all the ready money he could lay hands on, amounting to several hundred pounds. He had furnished Jim with ample funds to facilitate his share of the preparations, and he had still an hour or two on hand before the important moment arrived. That interval he devoted to his private affairs and those of the office, so that his uncle should be inconvenienced as little as possible by an absence which he now hoped might be prolonged for a considerable time.

It had been dark for more than an hour ere the accomplices met again, equipped and ready for the work they had pledged themselves to undertake.

Jim, indeed, contrary to his wont when 'business,' as he called it, was on hand, seemed scarcely sober; but to obtain the use of the vehicle he required without the company of its driver, he had found it necessary to ply the latter with liquor till he became insensible, although the

drunken man's instincts of good fellowship made him insist that his generous entertainer should partake largely of the fluids consumed at his expense. To drink down a London cabman, on anything like fair terms, is an arduous task, even for a housebreaker, and Jim's passions were roused to their worst by alcohol long before he arrived with his four-wheeled cab at the appointed spot where he was to wait for Tom Ryfe.

How he laughed to himself while he felt the pliant life-preserver coiled in his great-coat pocket—the long, keen, murderous knife resting against his heart. A fiend had taken possession of the man. Already overleaping the intervening time, ignoring everything but the crime he meditated, his chief difficulty seemed how he should dispose of Tom's mutilated body ere he flew to reap the harvest of his guilt.

He chuckled and grinned with a fierce, savage sense of humour, while he recalled the imperious manner in which Mr. Ryfe had taken the initiative in their joint proceedings; as if they originated in his own invention, were ordered solely for his own convenience; and the tone of authority in which that gentleman had warned him not to be late.

'It's good! That is!' said Jim, sitting on the box of the cab, and peering into the darkness, through which a gas-lamp glimmered with dull, uncertain rays, blurred by the autumn fog. 'You'd like to be master, you would, I dare say, all through the job, and for me to be man! You'd best look sharp about it. I'll have that blessed life of yours afore the sun's up to-morrow, and see who'll be master then. Ay, and missis, too! Hooray! for the cruel eyes, and the touch-me-not airs! The proud, pale-faced devil! as thought Jim wasn't quite the equals of the dirt beneath her feet. Steady! Here he comes.'

And looming through the fog, Mr. Ryfe approached with cautious, resolute step; carrying a revolver in his pocket, prepared to use it, too, on occasion, with the fearless energy of a desperate man.

'Is it all ready, Jim?' said he, in a whisper. 'You haven't forgot the gag? Nor the shawl to throw round her head? The least mistake upsets a job like this.'

For answer, Jim descended heavily from his seat, and holding the cab-door open, pointed to the above-named articles lying folded on the front seat.

'You'll drive, master,' said he, with a hoarse chuckle. 'You knows the way. First turn to the left. I'll ride inside, like a lord, or a fashionable doctor, and keep my eye on the tackle.'

'It's very dark,' continued Tom, uneasily. 'But that's all in our favour, of course. You know her figure as well as I do. Don't forget, now. I'll drive close to the pavement, and the instant we stop, you must throw the shawl over her head, muffle her up, and whip her in. This beggar can gallop, I suppose.'

'He's a thoroughbred 'un,' answered Jim, with a sounding pat on the horse's bony ribs. 'Leastways, so the chap as I borrowed him off of swore solemn. He was so precious drunk. I'm blessed if I think he knowed what he meant. But howsoever, I make no doubt the critter can go when it's pushed.'

Thus speaking, Jim helped the other to mount the box, and placed himself inside with the door open, ready to spring like a tiger when he should catch sight of his prey.

The streets of the great city are never so deserted as an hour or two after nightfall, and an hour or two before dawn. Not a single passenger did they meet, and only one policeman; while the cab with its desperate inmates rattled and jolted along on this nefarious enterprise.

It was stopped at last close to the footway in a dimly-lighted street, within a hundred yards of Lord Bearwarden's house, which stood a few doors off round the corner.

A distant clock struck the hour. That heavy clang seemed to dwell on the gloomy stillness of the atmosphere, and both men felt their nerves strangely jarred by the dull, familiar sound.

Their hearts beat fast. Tom

began to wish he had adopted some less unconventional means of attaining his object, and tried in vain to drive from his mind the punishments awarded to such offences as he meditated by the severity of our criminal code.

Jim had but one feeling, with which heart and brain were saturated. In a few minutes he would see her again! In a new character, possibly—tearful, humbled, supplicating. No; his instincts told him that not even the last extremity of danger would force a tear from those proud eyes, nor bow that haughty head an inch. How this wild, fierce worship maddened him! So longing, yet so slavish—so reckless, so debased, yet all the while cursed with a certain leavening of the true faith, that drove him to despair. But come what might, in a few minutes he would see her again. Even at such a time, there was something of repose and happiness in the thought.

So the quasi-thoroughbred horse went to sleep and the men waited; waited, wondering how the lagging minutes could pass so slow.

Listen! a light footstep round the corner. The gentle rustle of a woman's dress. A tall slight figure gliding yonder under the gas-lamp, coming down the street, even now, with head erect, and easy, undulating gait.

The blood rose to Jim's brain till it beat like strokes from a sledge-hammer. Tom shortened the reins, and tightened the grasp round the whip.

Nearer, nearer she came on. The pure, calm face held high aloft, the pliant figure moving ever with the same smooth, graceful gestures. Fortune favoured them; she stopped when she reached the cab, and seemed about to engage it for her journey.

The men were quick to see their advantage. Jim, coiled for a spring, shrank into the darkest corner of the vehicle. Tom, enacting driver, jumped down, and held the door to help her in.

Catching sight of the dark figure on the front seat, she started back. The next moment there rose a faint

stified shriek: the shawl was over her head. Jim's powerful arms wound themselves tight round her body, and Tom clambered in haste to the box.

But quick feet had already rained along that fifty yards of pavement. A powerful grasp was at the driver's throat, pulling him back between the wheels of the cab: and he found himself struggling for life with a strong, angry man, who swore desperately, while two more figures ran at speed up the street.

Tom's eyes were starting, his tongue was out.

'Jim, help me!' he managed to articulate. 'I'm choking.'

'You infernal scoundrel!' exclaimed his antagonist, whose fury seemed redoubled by the sound of that familiar voice: the grasp closing round Tom's neck like iron, threatened death unless he could get free.

An instinct of self-preservation bade him pluck at his revolver. He got it out at the moment when Jim, setting his back to the door to secure his captive, dealt with the heavy life-preserver a blow at the assailant's head, which fortunately only reached his shoulder. The latter released Tom's throat to get possession of the pistol. In the struggle it went off. There was a hideous blasphemy, a groan, and a heavy fall between the wheels of the cab.

Ere the smoke cleared away two more auxiliaries appeared on the scene. With Simon Perkins's assistance, Lord Bearwarden had little difficulty in pinioning his late antagonist; while Dick Stanmore, having lifted the imprisoned lady out of the cab, over the house-breaker's prostrate body, held her tightly embraced, in a transport of affection intensified by alarm.

Lord Bearwarden, usually so collected, was now utterly stupefied and amazed. He looked from Tom Ryfe's white face, staring over the badge and great coat of a London cabman, to the sinking form of his wife—as he believed—in the arms of her lover, clinging to him for protection, responding in utter shamelessness to his caresses and endearments.

'Mr. Stanmore!' he exclaimed, in a voice breathless from exertion, and choking with anger. 'You and I have an account to settle that cannot be put off. Lady Bearwarden, I will see you home. Come with me this instant.'

Dick seemed as if he thought his lordship had gone mad. Nina stared helplessly at the group. Another gasp and a fainter groan came from the body lying underneath the cab.

'We must look to this man; he is dying,' said Simon Perkins, on his knees by the prostrate form, now motionless and insensible.

'My house is round the corner,' answered Lord Bearwarden, stooping over the fallen ruffian. 'Let us take him in. All the doctors in the world won't save him,' he added, in a tone of grave pity. 'He's bleeding to death inside.'

Nina had been a good deal frightened, but recovered wonderfully in the reassuring presence of her lover. 'His house?' she asked, in a sufficiently audible voice, considering her late agitation. 'Who is he, Dick? and where does he live?'

Two of the police had now arrived, and were turning their lanterns on the party. The strong white light glared full on Miss Algernon's face and figure, so like Lady Bearwarden's, but yet to the husband's bewildered senses so surely not his wife's.

He shook all over. His face, though flushed a moment ago, turned deadly pale. He clutched Dick's shoulder, and his voice came dry and husky, while he gasped—

'What is it, Stanmore? Speak, man, for the love of heaven? What does it all mean?'

Then came question and answer: clearer, fuller, more fluently with every sentence. And so the explanation went on; how some enemy had roused his worst suspicions; how Lord Bearwarden, deceived by the extraordinary likeness which he could not but acknowledge even now, had been satisfied he saw Dick Stanmore with Maud in a hansom cab; how he had left his home in consequence, and sent that hostile message to Dick, which had so puzzled that gallant,

openhearted gentleman; how a certain letter from Lady Bearwarden, addressed to Mr. Stanmore, and forwarded to her husband, had but confirmed his suspicions; and how, at last, an anonymous communication to the same lady, falling accidentally into his hands, had mystified him completely, and made him resolve to watch and follow her at the hour named, with a desperate hope that something might be revealed to alleviate his sufferings, to give him more certainty of action for future guidance.

'I was horribly cut up, I don't mind confessing it,' said Lord Bearwarden, with his kindly grasp still on Dick's shoulder. 'And I waited there, outside my own house, like some d——d poaching thief. It seemed so hard that I couldn't go in and see her just once more! Presently, out she came, as I thought, and I followed, very craftily, and not too near, for fear she should look round. She didn't, though, but walked straight on; and when I saw the cab waiting, and she stopped as if she meant to get in, I couldn't tell what to make of it at all.'

'I was only just in time. I came that last few yards with a rush, I give you my word! And I made a grab at the driver, thinking the best chance was to stop the conveyance at once, or if I couldn't do that, take a free passage with the rest of them. She wasn't going of her own accord, I felt sure. That villain of a lawyer struggled hard. I didn't think he had been so good a man. I wasn't at all sorry to see you fellows coming up. It was two to one, you know, and I do believe, if it hadn't been for the pistol, they might have got clear off. It shot the worst customer of the two, that poor fellow behind us, right through the body. Under my arm, I should think, for I got a very nasty one on the shoulder just as the smoke flew in my face. It has squared his accounts, I fancy! But here we are at my house. Let's get him in, and then you must introduce me properly to this young lady, whose acquaintance I have made in such an unusual manner.'

The strange procession had, indeed, arrived at Lord Bear-

warden's residence. It consisted of the proprietor himself, whose right arm was now completely disabled, but who gesticulated forcibly with his left; of Dick Stanmore and Nina, listening to his lordship with the utmost deference and attention; of Jim's senseless body, carried by Simon Perkins and one policeman, while Tom Ryfe, in close custody of the other, brought up the rear. As they entered the hall, Lady Bearwarden's pale, astonished face was seen looking over the banisters. Dorothea, too, creeping down stairs, with some vague idea of escaping from this friendly refuge, and finding her way back, perhaps, to the cool shining Serpentine, came full upon the group at the moment when Jim was laid tenderly down by his bearers, and the policeman whispered audibly to his comrade that, even if the doctor were in the next street now, he would come too late!

She ran forward with a wild, despairing cry. She flung herself down by the long, limp, helpless figure. She raised the drooping head with its matted locks, its fixed, white, rigid face, and pressed it hard against her bosom—hard to her wayward, ignorant, warped, but loving heart.

'Speak to me, Jim!' she moaned once more, rocking backwards and forwards in her fierce agony. 'Speak to me, deary! You'll never speak again. Oh! why did they stop me to-day? It's cruel—cruel! Why did they stop me? We'd have been together before now!'

And the groom of the chambers, an unwilling witness of all these indecorous proceedings, resolved, for that one night, to do his duty stanchly by his employer, but give up his place with inflexible dignity on the morrow.

CHAPTER XXX.

UNDER THE ACACIAS.

'Out of drawing; flesh tints infamous; chiaroscuro grossly muddled; no breadth; not much story in it; badly composed; badly treated; badly painted altogether.'

So said the reviews, laying down

the infallible law of the writer, concerning Simon Perkins's great picture. The public followed the reviews, of course, in accordance with a generous instinct, urging it to believe that he who can write his own language, not, indeed, accurately, but with a certain force and rapidity, must therefore be conversant with all the subjects on which he chooses to declaim. Statesman, chemist, engineer, shipbuilder, soldier, above all, navigator, painter, plasterer, and statuary; like the hungry Greek adventurer of Juvenal, *omnia novit*: like Horace's wise man amongst the Stoics; be the subject boots, beauty, bullocks, or the beer-trade, he is universal instructor and referee.

'Et sutor bonus, et solus formosus, et est rex.'

So reviewers abused the picture persistently, and Lord Bearwarden was furious, brandishing a weekly newspaper above his head, and striding about the little Putney lawn with an energy that threatened to immerse him in the river, forgetful of those narrow limits, suggesting the proverbial extent of a fisherman's walk on deck, 'two steps and overboard.'

His audience, though, were partial and indulgent. The old ladies in the drawing-room, overhearing an occasional sentence, devoutly believed their nephew was the first painter of his time, Lord Bearwarden the wisest critic that ever lived, the greatest nobleman, the bravest soldier, the kindest husband, always excepting, perhaps, that other husband smoking there under the acacia, interchanging with his lordship many a pleasant jest and smile, that argued the good understanding existing between them.

Dick Stanmore and Lord Bearwarden were now inseparable. Their alliance furnished a standing joke for their wives. 'They have the same perverted tastes, my dear, and like the same sort of people,' light-hearted Nina would observe to the sister whom she had not found till the close of her girlish life. 'It's always fast friends, or, at least, men with a strong tendency to friendship, who are in love with the same woman, and I don't believe they

hate each other half as much as we should, even for *that*!

To which Maud would make no reply, gazing with her dark eyes out upon the river, and wondering whether Dick had ever told the wife he loved how fondly he once worshipped another face so like her own.

For my part, I don't think he had. I don't think he could realize the force of those past feelings, nor comprehend that he could ever have cared much for any one but the darling who now made the joy of his whole life. When first he fell in love with Nina, it was for her likeness to her sister. Now, though in his eyes the likeness was fading every day, that sister's face was chiefly dear to him because of its resemblance to his wife's.

Never was there a happier family party than these persons constituted. Lord and Lady Bearwarden, Mr. and Mrs. Stanmore, drove down from London many days in the week to the pretty Putney villa. Simon was truly rejoiced to see them, while the old ladies vibrated all over, caps, fronts, ribbons, lockets, and laces, with excitement and delight. The very flowers had a sweeter perfume, the laburnums a richer gold, the river a softer ripple, than in the experience of all previous springs.

'They may say what they like,' continued Lord Bearwarden, still with the weekly paper in his hand.

I maintain the criterion of merit is success. I maintain that the Rhymer and the Fairy Queen is an extraordinary picture, and the general public the best judge. Why there was no getting near it at the Academy. The people crowded round as they do about a cheap Jack at a fair. I'm not a little fellow, but I couldn't catch a glimpse of any part except the Fairy Queen's head. I think it's the most beautiful face I ever saw in my life!

'Thank you, Lord Bearwarden,' said Nina, laughing. 'He'd such a subject, you know; it's no wonder he made a good picture of it.'

No wonder, indeed! Did she ever think his brush was dipped in colours ground on the poor artist's heart?

'It's very like *you* and it's very like Maud,' answered Lord Bear-

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warden. 'Somehow you don't seem to me so like each other as you used to be. And yet how puzzled I was the second time I ever set eyes on you.'

'How cross you were! and how you scolded!' answered saucy Mrs. Stanmore. 'I wouldn't have stood it from Dick. Do you ever speak to Maud like that?'

The look that passed between Lord and Lady Bearwarden was a sufficient reply. The crowning beauty had come to those dark eyes of hers, now that their pride was centred in another, their lustre deepened and softened with the light of love.

'It was lucky for you, dear, that he ~~was~~ angry,' said her ladyship. 'If he had hesitated a moment, it's frightful to think what would have become of you, at the mercy of those reckless, desperate men!'

'They were punished, at any rate,' observed Nina gravely. 'I shall never forget that dead fixed face in the hall. Nor the other man's look, the cowardly one, while he prayed to be forgiven. Forgiven, indeed! One ought to forgive a great deal, but not such an enormity as that!'

'I think he got off very cheap,' interposed Dick Stanmore. 'He deserved to be hanged, in my opinion, and they only transported him—not even for life!'

'Think of the temptation, Dick,' replied Nina, with another saucy smile. 'How would you like it yourself? And you were in pursuit of the same object. You can't deny that, only he hit upon me first.'

'I was more sorry for the other villain,' said Lord Bearwarden, who had heard long ago the history of Gentleman Jim's persecution of her ladyship. 'He was a daring, reckless scoundrel, and I should like to have killed him myself, but it *did* seem hard lines to be shot by his own confederate in the row!'

'I pity that poor woman most of all,' observed Lady Bearwarden, with a sigh. 'It is quite a mercy that she should have lost her senses. She suffered so dreadfully till her mind failed.'

'How is she?' 'Have you seen her?' came from the others in a breath.

'I was with her this morning,' answered Maud. 'She didn't know me. I don't think she knows anybody. They can't get her to read, nor do needlework, nor even walk out into the garden. She's never still, poor thing! but paces up and down the room mumbling over a bent half-crown and a knot of ribbon,' added Lady Bearwarden, with a meaning glance at her husband, 'that they found on the dead man's body, and keeps pressing it against her breast while she mutters something about their wanting to take it away. It's a sad, sad sight! I can't get that wild vacant stare out of my head. It's the same expression that frightened me so on her face that day by the Serpentine. It has haunted me ever since. She seemed to be looking miles away across the water at something I couldn't see. I wonder what it was. I wonder what she looks at now!'

'She's never been in her right senses, has she, since that dreadful night?' asked Nina. 'If she were a lady, and well dressed, and respectable, one would say it's quite a romance. Don't you think perhaps, after all, it's more touching as it is?' and Nina, who liked to make little heartless speeches she did not mean, looked lovingly on Dick, with her dark eyes full of tears, as she wondered what would become of her if anything happened to him!

'I can scarcely bear to think of it,' answered Maud, laying her hand on her husband's shoulder. 'Through all the happiness of that night—far, far the happiest of my whole life—this poor thing's utter misery comes back to me like a warning and a reproach. If I live to a hundred I shall never forget her when she looked up to heaven from the long rigid figure with its fixed white face, and tried to pray, and couldn't, and didn't know how! Oh! my darling!—and here Maud's voice sank to a whisper, while the haughty head drooped lovingly and humbly towards her husband's arm,—what have I done that I should be so blessed, while there is all this misery and disappointment and despair in the world?'

He made no attempt at explanation. The philosophy of our Household Cavalry, like the religion of Napoleon's 'Old Guard,' is adapted for action rather than casuistry. He did not tell her that in the journey of life for some the path is made smooth and easy, for others paved with flints and choked with thorns; but that a wise Director knows best the capabilities of the wayfarer, and the amount of toil required to fit him for his rest. So up and down, through rough and smooth, in storm and sunshine—all these devious tracks lead home at last. If Lord Bearwarden thought this, he could not put it into words, but his arm stole lovingly round the slender waist, and over his brave, manly face came a gentle look that seemed to say he asked no better than to lighten every load for that dear one through life, and bear her tenderly with him on the road to heaven.

'*C'est l'amour!*' laughed Nina; 'that makes all the bother and complications of our artificial state of existence!'

'And all its sorrows!' said Lord Bearwarden.

'And all its sin!' said her ladyship.

'And all its beauty!' said Dick.

'And all its happiness!' added the painter, who had not yet spoken, from his seat under the acacia that grew by the water's edge.

'Well put!' exclaimed the others, 'and you need not go out of this dear little garden in search of the proof.'

But Simon made no answer. Once more he was looking wistfully on the river, thinking how it freshened and fertilized all about it as it passed by. Fulfilling its noble task—bearing riches, comforts, health, happiness, yet taking to deck its own bosom not one of the humblest wild flowers that must droop and die but for its love. Consoler, sympathizer, benefactor, night and day. Gently, noiselessly, imperceptibly speeding its good work, making no pause, knowing no rest, till far away beyond that dim horizon, under the golden heaven, it merged into the sea.

OUTSIDERS OF SOCIETY AND THEIR HOMES IN LONDON.

WHENEVER I looked up from my newspaper I met the eye of a middle-aged gentleman who was sitting in the same box—a box, I should mention, in the coffee-room of an old-fashioned hotel in London, which is partitioned off in primitive style. I say gentleman advisedly, for the stranger had every apparent claim to be so called. For the rest there was little to distinguish him from the crowd of well-dressed and well-mannered persons whom one meets about in public places. He might be a clergyman, or a lawyer, or a doctor, though I should doubt his being an active member of either profession. He gave you the idea of a man retired from any pursuit in which he might have been engaged, and to be occupied rather in killing time than in inviting time to kill him. He had a healthy, happy-looking face, bearing no traces of hard work or deep thought, and his hair was only partially grey. He had a mild eye, and a mild voice, and a mild manner—I noticed the two latter qualities through his intercourse with the waiter—and was so suave in his ways as to be polite even to the port that he was drinking after an early dinner. He handled his decanter in a caressing manner such as he might adopt towards a favourite niece, and took up his wine-glass as gently as if it were a child.

Whenever I met his eye I noticed that it gave me a kind of recognising look, which, however, was not sustained; for, before he had thoroughly attracted my attention he always returned to the illustrated journal before him, as if suddenly determined to master some abstruse subject with a great deal of solution in the way of woodcuts. His communicative appearance made me think that I had met him before, but it did not occur to me where, so I took no further notice. Presently he spoke, but he only said—

‘I beg your pardon, sir.’

There was nothing to beg my pardon about, so I begged his, not

to be outdone in gratuitous courtesy. Then he begged mine again, adding—

‘I thought you made a remark—I did not quite hear.’

No, I said; I had not made any remark. Then we both bowed and smiled, and resumed our reading—the stranger with some little confusion I thought.

After a time he made a remark himself.

‘I should not have intruded,’ said he, ‘but I thought I had met you before.’

I am not one of those persons who think that every stranger who addresses them in a public room means to pick their pockets, but I have a proper prejudice against being bored, and in any case I had no resource but to answer as I did, to the effect that I could not recall the when and the where.

‘Were you ever in Vancouver’s Island?’ the stranger asked.

In the cause of truth I was obliged to declare a negative.

‘Then it could not have been there,’ said he, musingly; ‘but,’ he added, ‘you might have known Colonel Jacko—a relation of mine—who was governor of the Island. You remind me of him—that is why I ask.’

I did not quite see the connection between knowing a man and bearing a personal resemblance to him, but in disavowing any acquaintance with Colonel Jacko, I did so with all courtesy.

‘You have been probably in New Zealand?’ pursued the stranger, warming apparently into considerable interest in the question involved; ‘if so you must have known Major-General Mango, who commanded there in 18—’

I was obliged to confess my ignorance of the unfortunate colony in question, and of the distinguished officer alluded to.

‘I merely asked,’ continued the stranger with a desponding air, ‘as he was a relation of mine.’

I had nothing to do with his re-

latives any more than himself, but his manner was so gentle that I could not think it intentionally obtrusive, so I acknowledged the receipt of the information as pleasantly as possible.

'If you had been in India,' he pursued, taking it for granted apparently that I was no traveller, 'you would probably have met one of my sons. One is in the civil, the other in the military service. Both fine fellows. The elder was political agent at Tulwarpatam at the time when the Rajah was so aggressive, and it was through his influence that his highness was induced to remit the Abkaree duties and give up his claim to the contested Jaghires. The other was through the mutinies, and was wounded both at Delhi and Lucknow—curious coincidence, was it not?'

I admitted that his sons seemed to have done the State some service, and remarked upon the coincidence as one of those mysterious dispensations of Providence for which it is impossible to account. And that was all I could do towards the conversation, which dropped at this point.

Presently the stranger took his hat, with an undecided but ultimately effectual movement. Then he called the waiter, and had a little conversation with that functionary about the port, which he said was not quite the same that he used to have in the year 1835. (I strongly suspect, by-the-way, that he was right in this supposition; as the wine he had been drinking belonged probably to the celebrated vintage of 1869.) At last he made a movement to depart, and ultimately did depart, but only after a great deal of delay; and even when in actual motion across the room, he looked back more than once, as if expecting somebody to ask him to remain.

When the waiter came to clear away the abandoned decanter and glass, I asked him if he knew the gentleman who had just gone out.

'Yes, sir,' was the reply; 'we have known the gentleman for some years, though he does not come very

often. He lives by himself somewhere in town, and has no relations except some who are abroad. He says he has no friends, too, as he has lost a great deal of money, and cannot keep the society he did. He doesn't seem to know anybody who comes here, though he talks to some now and then, as he has to you.'

I was sorry not to have heard this before, that I might have treated the stranger with a little more attention. For this glimpse I had of him, and the few hints given me by the waiter, were sufficient to assure me that he belonged to a class who are more perhaps to be pitied than the merely poor; that he is in the world but is not of it, and has a residence but is without a home; that he is in fact—an Outsider of Society.

People engaged in active pursuits—whether in spending or making money—are not likely to be troubled by deprivations of the kind referred to. They live among their peers, with whom they have interests in common. They are as important to others as others are important to them. They are in the stream of pleasure or business as the case may be. There is no danger that they will be forgotten. Their doors are besieged by visitors, drawn by diverse attractions; so that it is necessary to make a vigorous classification of the latter, not only of the usual social character, but distinguishing those who come to oblige the master of the house, from those who come to oblige themselves. Their tables are covered with cards and letters, prospectuses, tradesmen's circulars, begging petitions, newspapers they have never ordered, and books that it is thought they may possibly want. Their vote and interest is always being requested for deserving individuals, and their subscriptions for equally deserving institutions. Chance of being forgotten indeed! So long as they can be made useful there is as much chance of the Bank of England being forgotten. Such men may be alone, sometimes, in one sense of the term. That is to say their relations

may be scattered or dead. But that is of very little practical moment in their case. They can always find people prepared to be second fathers or brothers to them, and even second mothers and sisters, it may be. They can always marry, too, and then a home establishes itself as a matter of course.

But there are—who shall say how many?—people living in London who live almost alone; who have no society except of a casual, and what may be called an anonymous kind; and whose homes are merely places where they may obtain shelter and rest. I am not here alluding to the class who are social and domestic outlaws because they are positively poor. There is no anomaly in this condition of life; it is a natural consequence of having no money. The people I mean have mostly money enough for themselves, but not sufficient to make them important to others, and obtain for them consideration in the world. Sometimes their positions have changed; sometimes things have changed around them and left their positions as they were, the result being much the same. It may be that they are seeking to make a little more money by such employments as agencies, secretariats, and so forth—employments the most difficult of all to get as any man of moderate education and abilities can do the duties—but most frequently they are content to vegetate upon what they have, and to concentrate themselves upon the attainment of companionship and home. When one of the active men whom I have mentioned goes away from home, the Post Office establishment is ruthlessly disturbed by mandates for the re-addressing and forwarding of letters. The migration of one of our passive friends makes no difference to anybody. Except it be an occasional communication from a relation in a distant colony, sent to the care of an agent, he has no letters to trouble him, and if he did not occasionally make a show of existence by asserting himself in pen and ink, he might perish out of the memory of man. To such people the advertising columns of

the newspapers must possess peculiar interest; for a large number of the announcements seem expressly intended to meet their requirements, while on the other hand an equal number of the specified 'Wants' seem to come from their class.

Homes for special purposes appear to be plentiful enough. You cannot take up a newspaper without having your attention called to a dozen or two. Apart from the 'Home for Lost and Starving Dogs,'—which is an establishment not applying, except by sympathy, to any class of my readers—we have such charities as the 'Convalescent Home,' established by the wife of the Premier. In the next column we are sure to be reminded of the 'Home for Little Boys,' in addition to which has just been appropriately projected a 'Home for Little Girls,'—not the least desirable object of the two. An individual speculator has also established what he rather invidiously calls an 'Epileptic Home for the sons of gentlemen,'—there being, it is to be presumed, gentee as well as vulgar forms of the malady in question. 'Educational Homes' for youth of both sexes abound in newspaper announcements. They may afford very good opportunities for the intended purpose, but I should prefer placing my trust in establishments which are candidly called schools. Not long since I saw an advertisement in a morning paper which ran, as nearly as I can remember, in these terms:—

'A clergyman in a popular parish by the sea-side, offers an Educational Home to a few little boys of good principles, the sons of gentlemen. Apply,' &c.

Now, without desiring to be harsh to the advertiser, I must take leave to say that the above contains several important errors in taste. It would have been just as well, and a great deal better, perhaps, had the clergyman refrained from mentioning the popularity of his parish, however much the description might be deserved. His specification of little boys 'of good principles' suggests a slur upon little boys in general which does

not come well from an educator of youth; and one would think that he would be more usefully engaged in taking in hand little boys of bad principles, if any such exist. But the inference next suggested is even less creditable to the reverend advertiser. It is of no use, it seems, for little boys to have good principles, as far as he is concerned, unless they be the sons of gentlemen. This is sad.

But the mention of homes of a special character—of which there are many more in London than have been enumerated—is only incidental to my present purpose. I especially allude to lonely people who seek society, and to which society, in a certain limited degree, seems continually offering to sell itself. And among lonely people, as far as homes are concerned, must be included 'persons engaged in the City,' or 'engaged during the day,' who are frequently appealed to by advertisers. The number of persons—idle or occupied—who want homes, seem to be equalled only by the number of persons who are prepared to offer them, with very small pecuniary temptation. I have always thought that a great deal of self-sacrifice must be necessary in the case of the family of a dancing-master who for years past has been advertising his lessons with the addition that 'the Misses X— will officiate as partners.' The Misses X— must surely be tired by this time of dancing with people who drop them directly they are able to dance. But it must be still more sad to take into your family any chance stranger who may seem sufficiently respectable, board him, and lodge him, and promise to be 'cheerful' and 'musical' for his amusement. But offers of this kind are plentiful enough, and they would not be made were there not a fair supply of people to embrace them.

Looking back at only one daily paper for only a week or ten days may be found a host of advertisements of both classes; and I will first allude to a few of these among the 'Wants.'

Here is a specimen:—

'Home wanted by a respectable elderly lady—rather invalid, not helpless—in a sociable family; meals with it understood. Children objectionable. Large bedroom (not top) facing east or south indispensable. Aspect important. Forty guineas. Must be west of Holborn: other localities useless. Letters,' &c.

It would be difficult to determine the exact state of this respectable elderly lady's health from the above description, there being a rather long range between the affirmative and the suggestions offered by the negative statement; but even though she be in a high state of agility the conditions are surely rather complex: and there must be families in which forty guineas a year go a great way if she has any chance of gratifying her wishes.

Another elderly lady is more explicit, if not quite grammatical. She describes herself as 'an invalid from rheumatism,' and her desire is 'to board with a genteel, cheerful family.' Here again there must be 'no children.' She prefers 'the neighbourhood of St. John's Wood, near the Park, or an equal distance from the West-End.' Letters must be pre-paid.

The following looks like a case in which society is an object:—

'Board and residence wanted, by a widow lady and a young lady, and partial board for a young gentleman, within three miles north of London, near a station. Children objected to. [Poor children!] Three bedrooms indispensable. Preference given to a musical family, where there is a daughter who would be companionable.' Terms, it is added, 'must be moderate.'

The following has not a pleasant sound:—

'Wanted, a comfortable home for a female aged seventy years, where there are no children [children again!]. She must be treated with great firmness. Twelve shillings will be paid weekly for board, lodging, and washing. Surrey side preferred,' &c.

It is evident that the above offer has not been made by the person for whom the accommodation is sought. But such requirements, including

even the 'great firmness,' doubtless get supplied. One of the numerous advertisers who provide homes for invalid ladies offers, I observe, to give 'reference to the relatives of a lady lately deceased,' who lived in the house for seven years.

Here is a 'home' of remarkable character: it is described as situated in a favourite suburb on the Metropolitan Railway, replete with every beauty and convenience, the details being specially enumerated; and besides the railway, omnibuses pass the door to all parts of town. 'The advertiser,' it is added, 'would prefer one or two City gentlemen of convivial disposition, and to such, liberal terms would be offered.'

The advertiser has evidently an abstract love for City gentlemen of convivial disposition, since he is prepared to share his home with any one or two of them. And if a City gentleman of convivial disposition could make a vast wilderness dear—which it is very possible he could do—one can fancy what a paradise he would make of this Cashmere at Shepherd's Bush. It is not quite clear, indeed, that the advertiser is not prepared to pay instead of being paid by the charming society he seeks, since he says that 'to such liberal terms will be offered.' It must be a very delightful thing to be a City gentleman of convivial disposition, with the feeling of having unknown friends, which has been said to resemble our ideas of the existence of angels.

Another proffered 'home' is described as having, in addition to all domestic comforts, 'two pianos, with young and musical society.' This may be very pleasant; but I should feel some misgivings at the prospect of making one of a 'young and musical society' let loose upon two pianos at the same time. There are different opinions, too, even about the best music, under different conditions. The Irish soldier who was singing the 'Last Rose of Summer,' perhaps from the bottom of his heart, but certainly at the top of his voice, was told by his English comrade to hold his noise. 'And he calls Moore's Melodies a noise,' said

the musical enthusiast, disgusted at the want of taste exhibited by the cold-blooded Saxon.

A cheerful state of existence is suggested by another advertisement of a 'home':—

'Partial board is offered to a gentleman by a cheerful, musical, private family. Early breakfast; meat tea. Dinner on Sundays. Gas, piano, croquet. Terms 1*l.* 1*s.* per week. Write,' &c.

The board must be partial indeed if that melancholy meal known as a 'meat tea' enters into the arrangement. A 'meat tea' would in any case mean that you were expected to go without your dinner, since, if you had dined you would not want meat with your bohea. But there is no disguise about the matter here, for you are frankly told that there will be dinner, as distinguished from a meat tea, on Sundays. It is a monstrous, unnatural idea, and the family must be very cheerful, very musical, and very private, I should think, to reconcile most men to such a state of things. Perhaps the piano and the croquet are intended as a set-off, by suggesting female society of an accomplished kind; and of course there are some girls for whom some men will submit to meat teas; but I have my own opinion as to the chances of either one or the other.

Here is an advertisement of a 'home' couched in popular terms. It would be a pity to interfere with the writer's style, so I give it in full, with the omission, of course, of the address:—

'A lady having a larger house than she requires is desirous of increasing her circle by receiving a few gentlemen (who are engaged during the day) as boarders. The society is cheerful and musical. To foreigners anxious to acquire elegant English, this is a good opportunity.'

As for the lady having a larger house than she requires, one can fancy that to be the case if she has room for several gentlemen, but how is it that so many persons get into larger houses than they require, and are thereby impelled to offer similar accommodation? It must

be confessed, too, that the opportunity for foreigners to acquire elegant English is not very apparent. Are the candidates for residence examined in elegant English before they are admitted into the family? As for the cheerfulness and the music, those are of course matters of taste.

Among other 'homes' which we find offered in the same paper is one with a curious recommendation attached. It has 'just been vacated,' we are told, 'by a young gentleman who has successfully passed his examination.' If the same advantage can be secured to the incoming tenant the accommodation would be decidedly cheap, for the modest sum of thirteen shillings a-week, which is all that is asked. But we are not told what is the nature of the examination—for the army, the Civil Service, a degree, or what? Perhaps it is only in the 'elegant English' intended to qualify the tenant for the higher social sphere of the lady with the partially superfluous house.

Invalid or 'mentally afflicted' persons are always in great request among advertisers. Several applications are before me now. One of these comes from 'A medical man, residing in a large and well-furnished house in one of the healthiest and most convenient out-districts of London,' who 'wishes to receive any patient mentally or otherwise afflicted, as a resident; boarding or separate arrangement as desired; a married couple, or two sisters, or friends, not objected to.' The contingency of companions in misfortune is a good idea; our medical friend is evidently a far-sighted man. Then we find the wife of a medical man, who is willing to take charge of 'an afflicted (not insane) lady, gentleman, or child, to whom she offers a comfortable home with experienced care.' A similar offer is made by the occupant of a farmhouse, but these do not draw the line at insanity, but declare that they have had the care of an insane patient for many years, and can be highly recommended in consequence. Some people indeed are so fond of taking care of insane patients that they would

not have a sane one if you made them a present of him. An illustration of this curious taste came under my notice not long since. A very deserving man called to see a patron of his who had procured him a post of the kind, which he had held for several months. 'I am very glad to see you, John,' was the greeting, 'and hope you are getting on in your employment.' 'Ah, that indeed I am, sir,' was the answer; 'thanks to you, I am most comfortably provided for—in fact, I was never so happy in my life. How did I get these two black eyes, sir? Oh, he gave them to me yesterday morning. Oh, yes, I shall always be grateful—I never was so happy in my life.'

It must be admitted that the majority of the 'homes' which people offer one another through the medium of the papers are not exposed to contingencies of this kind; but the said people must surely run the risk of finding themselves ill-assorted in no ordinary degree.

It is not to be supposed indeed that utter strangers would go and live together without some strong inducements; and these inducements are generally money on the one side and society on the other. The people who want the money—through having 'larger houses than they require,' or other causes, of which any number may be found with great facility—are less to be pitied than the people who want the society, for the latter must be dismally reduced in this respect before they can be brought to take it on chance. In a 'cheerful family musically inclined,' part of the compact of course is that the incomer shall be cheerful if not musical and companionable, at any rate. The requisition sounds awful, but it is one to which hundreds of harmless persons in this metropolis submit rather than be left alone. Many, of course, are induced by considerations of economy; and of those still more unfortunate than the ordinary class, are those of the more helpless, who do not accept a 'home' upon independent terms, but obtain it either gratuitously or for some very small payment upon

condition of being useful or helping to make things pleasant. Of these there are large numbers, to judge by the advertisements; and I suspect that they are rather worse off than those who 'go out' regularly as governesses and companions, for the latter have at least a chance of lighting upon rich and generous patrons. And here I may mention that a great deal of nonsense is written about governesses—more perhaps than about most other things. Their trade is a bad one, no doubt, because the market is overstocked. But that is no fault of the employers, who cannot be expected to fill their houses with young ladies of varying tastes and tempers, on account of their presumably 'superior' education and intelligence. Nor is it to be taken for granted that every governess is of the 'superior' kind, and all the people who engage their services, vulgar wretches who delight in inflicting mortification upon their betters. Who has not heard of families of the best breeding and refinement being tortured beyond all endurance by governesses of conspicuous inability to teach, who have let their pupils run wild, and concentrated their attention upon the men of the house, and whose insolent and overbearing ways have made the work of getting rid of them one of no common difficulty? Our novelists have not given us many illustrations of this side of the picture; but you may depend upon it that Becky Sharpes are at least as plentiful as Jane Eyres in real life.

A favourite resort of the homeless are boarding-houses. Of these establishments there are hundreds in London—from those devoted to the entertainment of minor City clerks, rigorously 'engaged during the day,' to those which—one is almost led to suppose—nobody under the rank of a baronet is received, and even then not without a reference as to respectability on the part of a peer. But most of these houses have one or two features in common. There is always a large admixture of people who go there for the sake of society; and of this number

a considerable proportion is sure to consist of widows or spinsters of extremely marriageable tendencies. The result is that, unless the residents be very numerous, individual freedom is lost, and, instead of living an independent life, as at an hotel, the members of a 'circle' find themselves surrounded by such amenities as may be supposed to belong to a rather large and singularly disunited family.

A great many marriages, however, are made in these establishments, and it is not on record that they turn out otherwise than well. It must be admitted, too, that men go there to find wives as well as women to find husbands, so that the arrangement thus far is fair on both sides. But I have been informed by men who are not among the latter number, that it is found difficult sometimes to get the fact generally understood. The consequent mistakes of course lead to confusion, and the result is the occasional retirement of determined bachelors into more private life.

There are 'homes' in London where there is not much mention of marriage, except as a reminiscence, and few of their members have the chance even of this melancholy enjoyment. I allude to houses in which, through the exertions principally of benevolent ladies, other ladies, who would probably be equally benevolent were they not less fortunate, have a residence assigned to them upon advantageous terms. That is to say, they live in an establishment where all their wants are supplied upon the payment, by themselves or their friends, of a small contribution towards the necessary outlay, the remainder being covered by subscriptions of a strictly private character. The recipients of this assistance are all gentlewomen—as is necessary to the state of social equality in which they live—and their admittance is obtained by favour of the benevolent ladies in question. These ladies are influenced, I suppose, by the introductions brought by the candidates, and considerations of their previous position—which has in every case been a great deal

superior to their present position, as may be supposed. The said 'homes' are very few in number, as far as I know, they have no connection with one another, and they are entirely private in their arrangements. The neighbours may happen to know that a certain house in which they find so many ladies living together is not a boarding house in the ordinary acceptation of the term. But there is nothing to proclaim the fact, and the inmates live in an apparent state of independence equal to that of anybody about them. And they live as contented, I believe, as can be in the case of persons who are not of such social importance as they were, and who have plenty of leisure to talk over the fact. They are all gentlewomen, as I have said, and upon terms of social equality; but it may be supposed that there are differences between them, as there are between people generally in society. You may depend upon it, that the lady who is related to an earl is of opinion that she is a preferable object of consideration to the lady who is related only to a baronet, while the claims of the other ladies to their several degrees of precedence are not unadjusted for want of accurate investigation. A few very likely 'give themselves airs' upon this score; while some pride themselves upon their beauty when young—(none of the ladies are *quite* young now)—and others establish a superiority upon account of their mental gifts. All this imparts a pleasant variety to the conversation, which would otherwise be in danger of falling into monotony. Such at least I suppose to be the case, for I am dealing in generalities, and cannot claim to a knowledge of any one in particular of these ladies' homes. For the rest the occupants are said to pass an easy, agreeable life, more especially those who are not without friends whom they can go to visit—in which case they are free to have as much amusement as if they lived in houses of their own.

I said something about boarding-houses just now. A great many of the homeless who have not tried

these establishments—or having tried them are unwilling to renew the experiment—live in furnished lodgings. On the Continent they would probably put up at hotels; but hotels in this country are not adapted for modest requirements, and furnished lodgings take a place which they have not yet learned to occupy. The mode of life is anomalous. It is neither public nor private. You may be independent in an hotel; you may be independent in your own house; in lodgings you can be independent by no possibility. If you spend rather more money than you would either in an hotel or your own house, you obtain comfort and attention; but the object of most persons who take lodgings is to be rather economical than otherwise, so that the reservation is of very little avail. Lodgings are of two classes—those that profess to be so, and those that solemnly declare they are not. The former are decidedly preferable, apart from the immorality of encouraging a sham. In the former case, if you occupy—say as a bachelor—only a couple of rooms in town, and the rest of the house is let to other people, you will obtain but precarious attendance from the solitary servant, and the chances are that you will never be able to get a decently-cooked meal. The food that they waste in such places by their barbarous mode of dealing with it is sad to think upon. Your only resource is to live out of doors as much as possible, and consider your rooms only as a refuge—the logical consequence of which is that it is best to abandon them altogether.

But you are better placed even under these conditions than if you go to a house in one of the suburbs—a pretty villa-looking place—knowing nothing about it beyond the information offered by the bill in the window. A not very clean servant opens the door, and does not impress you favourably at first glance. You are hesitating, under some discouragement, when the mistress of the house—presenting in her decorated exterior a considerable contrast to the servant—ap-

pears upon the scene and reproves the domestic sternly for her neglected appearance, sends her away to restore it, and meantime proceeds to transact business upon her own account. You ask her if she lets apartments. She gives a reproving look, and says 'No,' ignoring the announcement made by the bill. You mention that you knocked in consequence of seeing that intimation in the window; upon which the lady says—

'Oh, is it up? I was not aware. The fact is, I wish to receive a gentleman to occupy part of the house, as it is too large for us'—the old story—'and my husband being a great deal out, I find it rather lonely. But my husband is very proud and objects to having strange company.'

You remark that you need not have applied in that case, and will go elsewhere. This brings the lady to the point.

'Oh, I did not mean to say that you could not have any apartments here. I intend to have my own way in that matter'—this is said in a playful, fluttry manner, with a running laugh. 'If you will step in I will show you the accommodation we have. All I meant to say was that we are not accustomed to let lodgings.'

Rather amused than annoyed, you submit to be shown the rooms. They are pretty rooms—light and cheerful, and ornamental to a fault—and the garden at the back is alone a relief from the pent-up place you have been occupying in town. So after a few preliminary negotiations—conducted on the lady's side in the same playful manner—you agree to take the place, say for three months. The lady is evidently pleased at your decision, and avails herself of the opportunity for renewing her assurance that the house is not a lodging-house, and that you may expect all the comforts of domestic life.

'There are no other lodgers,' she added; then, as if suddenly recollecting, she corrects herself: 'That is to say, there is a commercial gentleman who is a great deal away, sleeping here for a night or

two—a friend of my husband's—and yes, let me see, a medical gentleman to whom we have allowed the partial use of a bedroom to oblige a neighbour just for the present, but I do not count either of them as lodgers.'

A commercial gentleman sleeping for a night or two, while he is a great deal away, does not seem an ordinary lodger at any rate; and from the distinction drawn in the case of the medical gentleman who is only allowed the partial use of a bedroom, you are inclined to think that he is permitted to lie down but not to go to sleep. However, you make no objection to these anomalies, and take possession of your new abode.

There never was such an imposture, as you find out only next day. The bagman and the medical student—as those gentlemen must be described, if the naked truth be respected—turn out to be regular lodgers, and as thorough nuisances as a couple of noisy men addicted to late hours and exaggerated conviviality can well be. And the woman never mentioned a discharged policeman—her father, I believe—to whom she affords a temporary asylum in the kitchen, in return for intermittent attentions in the way of blacking boots and cleaning knives—when he happens to be sober. For the rest, there is nobody in the house who can cook even such a simple matter as a mutton chop without spoiling it; and there seems to be everybody in the house who is determined that your private stores shall not be allowed to spoil for want of eating and drinking. Nothing is safe from the enemy, who combine their forces against you, and they take care that you shall have no protection, for not a lock which can give shelter to any portable article will act after you have been two days in the house. As for your personal effects, they are in equal danger. The average amount of loss in wearing apparel is one shirt and two handkerchiefs a week; and miscellaneous articles are sure to go if they are in the least degree pretty or curious. And the coolest part of the pro-

ceeding is, that the mildest complaint on your part brings down a storm upon your devoted head such as you could not have expected from the playful and fluttering person who had given you such pleasant assurances when you took the rooms. She claims to be a Caesar's wife in point of immunity from suspicion, and asserts the same privilege for everybody in the house. 'No gentleman was ever robbed there,' she says; and she plainly hints that no gentleman would say he was, even though he said the fact.

This is no exaggerated picture of many suburban lodgings to which outsiders of society are led to resort for want of better accommodation; and a large number of persons who are not outsiders in the sense in which I have employed the term, but who are simply not settled in the metropolis, are exposed to a similar fate. For those who are prepared for an ordeal of another nature, the 'cheerful family musically inclined' offers, one would think, a far preferable alternative. But it is not everybody who is prepared to have society thrust upon him, either in this quiet domestic way or in a large boarding-house, and there ought to be better provision than there is for the floating mass of casual residents in London. In Paris not only are there hotels suited to the requirements of all classes of persons, but the *maisons meublées* are places where they may

live almost as independently as in their own houses. In London, the only realization of the luxury short of an entire house is in what we call 'chambers,' and a man's chambers are most certainly his castle, whatever his house may be. That the want is being appreciated, is evident from the rapid extension of the 'chambers' system, in the way of the independent suites of rooms known as 'flats.' But the flats, as now provided in Victoria Street, and elsewhere, cost as much as entire houses, while the latest additions, the Belgrave and Grosvenor mansions, are even more costly, and beyond the reach of the classes to whom I have been referring. The latter would be deeply grateful for accommodation of the kind on a more moderate scale, and the investment of capital in such an object could not fail to be profitable. Besides the desolate people into whose sorrows I have entered, there are in London, it must be remembered, many hundreds of outsiders of society of a different kind, who are outsiders only from that conventional society in which it takes so much money to 'move,' and who ought to command greater comfort than they do while they are working their way in professional pursuits. For those actually in want of companionship, I suppose they will always incline to the hotel, or the boarding-house, or the 'cheerful family musically inclined.'

GOVERNESSES.

IT can scarcely be doubted that the current language of society reacts upon the modes of thought from which it springs, deepens them, and gives them force. One example of this is the way in which governesses are commonly spoken of as necessary evils. I am aware that it is the fashion to express great sympathy with governesses. For myself, sympathy is more with those who are doomed to suffer from these so-called 'necessary evils.'

It has been my fate to have much and varied experience of the genus governess, and, in a state of unusual philanthropy, I propose to detail some of it for the satisfaction of any fellow-sufferer, the saying being pre-eminently true, however unflattering to human nature, that the misfortunes of our fellow-men often give us more pleasure than pain.

'My dear James, it is perfectly useless for you to be for ever complaining about Miss Naylor. It is

quite impossible for us to do without her. I do not say that governesses are not evils, but, at all events, they are necessary ones.'

So said my wife to me one day when I complained that ever since my daughter Augusta Sophia attained her tenth year my home had, in a certain sense, ceased to be home to me. Working hard, as I did, all day, I had naturally acquired the habit of looking forward to the evening as a time both of freedom and recreation; so to be expected to be on my good behaviour and to play company to a decidedly objectionable-looking female was, to say the least of it, trying.

Miss Naylor, too, was the very primmest of prim old maids—dull, matter-of-fact, and absurdly *exigante* of what she considered to be due to her in the shape of attention from others. The following circumstance will be a sufficient proof of the lady's extreme tenaciousness. My wife found her one Sunday evening in floods of tears, and, really concerned, inquired if any domestic affliction had befallen her.

'No, Mrs. Campbell, no; but what delicate-minded person can feel herself a mark for obloquy and odium without bitter pain?'

My wife, looking, as she felt, completely mystified, Miss Naylor continued—

'You know that, at your request, I took the children this morning to church. Mr. Archer preached. He not only directed his sermon against me in the most marked and pointed manner, but kept his eyes fixed upon me the whole time.'

'But what could the sermon be about, Miss Naylor?' asked my wife. 'I feel sure you must be entirely mistaken.'

'Indeed I am not, Mrs. Campbell,' she replied. 'The sermon was upon detraction, upon speaking ill and untruthfully of others. Of course I knew that he alluded to my complaining to Mr. Bracebridge of Betsy Stokes, and I still believe what I say to be perfectly true.'

Mr. Archer was the new curate of the parish church. As he was quite a young man, and only recently appointed, my wife was firmly per-

suaded that he was unaware of the governess's existence. She was in great perplexity as to the possibility of conveying this impression to Miss Naylor's mind without adding to her mortification, and, after one or two futile attempts, gave it up in despair. When Miss Naylor resigned her post, after a few similar imaginings, I confess it afforded me great relief.

Almost any amount of sensitiveness may be accounted for, if not entirely excused, when we consider the extreme isolation of a governess's life. Simply tolerated by her employers, possibly disliked by her pupils, often treated contemptuously by servants, what position can be more trying or more likely to create the nervous depression which causes the small and indifferent circumstances of life to be viewed in a morbid and distorted manner? Still it is from this extreme touchiness that many governesses create the evil from which they suffer, for it is the *gêne* and stiffness which their presence generally causes that makes it to be an acknowledged annoyance.

Some people think that it is the duty of every mother to educate her children herself. But there are objections to this which make it, at best, a very doubtful advantage. Frequent correction about comparatively immaterial things is very undesirable, especially between a child and its mother, where anything that has the semblance of contention is better avoided. To raise a spirit of antagonism in a child, or to fritter away the authority of a parent, which should never be questioned, is a decided evil. Schools for girls are still more objectionable, so that, in a family where there are daughters to be educated, the assistance of a resident governess is almost indispensable. But, even if they are necessary, it does not follow that they are 'necessary evils.' It is generally in their own power to prevent their being looked upon as such. If they would only accept their position simply and naturally, without the sensitiveness that seems so essentially to belong to them, why should not the society of ladies who are both accomplished and

highly educated be an agreeable addition to the family circle? In some instances this is the case, and governess becomes the trusted and valued friend of both parents and children. But unfortunately these cases are rare—the exceptions and not the rule.

The position of a governess in any family is, doubtless, more trying than that of a tutor. He is less at the mercy of the caprice of his employers; he is treated more as an equal, is supposed to possess far greater freedom, and has many more distractions in the way of sharing the recreations and amusements of his pupils; besides which, very few men have the refined and sensitive organisation which belongs to women. Many of the slights and annoyances which are real grievances to a governess would be unnoticed or treated with perfect indifference by a tutor.

I have seen instances of touchiness on the part of governesses, even when living with those who had every disposition to consider them, which were so unreasonable as to be positively ludicrous. One especially I remember which occurred in the house of some friends with whom I was staying, where the governess was a very accomplished person and treated with a degree of attention and deference that surprised me.

'You are very fortunate this time in your governess, Mrs. Brooke,' I said, for she had been perpetually changing, 'are you not? You all seem to think a great deal of her.'

'Why, yes; for Miss Sadleir is such a very clever, agreeable person,' she replied, with a sigh and in rather a dismal tone—'in fact, quite a treasure. We are most fortunate in having secured her; but she has such extraordinarily acute feelings that it is next to impossible to avoid wounding them.'

I was soon a witness of the 'extraordinary acuteness' of Miss Sadleir's feelings, for one evening, when I carelessly left the drawing-room door open, Mr. Brooke asked Miss Sadleir, who was sitting near it, to be 'good enough to close the door, as he felt the draught.' Miss Sad-

leir looked at him—such a look of mingled scorn and reproach that it positively startled me—then, bursting into tears, she rose and left the room, closing the door behind her. As she did not return for some time, Mrs. Brooke went anxiously to seek her, and found her extended on her bed weeping bitterly.

'My dear Miss Sadleir, I am so grieved. What is the matter? I do trust that nothing has occurred to annoy you. I assure you that nothing would grieve Mr. Brooke or myself more,' she said, apologetically, with a faint glimmer of the truth.

'Perhaps not,' sobbed Miss Sadleir; 'but to be treated as Mr. Brooke treated me—like any servant—desiring me to shut the door, was more than I could bear, and I did not suppose he would have done such a thing.'

'I assure you Mr. Brooke must have spoken thoughtlessly. He has had such a very bad cold, and was afraid of the draught, that asking you to close the door was a complete oversight. I am sure he never intended to do so;' and, after having said all in her power to appease and console the afflicted lady, Mrs. Brooke returned to the drawing-room. In a kind of nervous flurry she at once commenced an attack upon her husband.

'My dear John, you have no idea how you have wounded Miss Sadleir by telling her to shut the door, just as if she was a servant. It struck me at the time as a most extraordinary thing to do. Of course she is dreadfully hurt. I wonder how you could think of doing so.'

Half perturbed and half provoked, Mr. Brooke said what he could in his own justification, but his wife continued to reproach him till Miss Sadleir's reappearance, with a look of a martyr, stopped the conversation.

I was considerably surprised by this little incident, but what occurred the ensuing evening amazed me still more, for upon the drawing-room door being again left open (though fortunately I was not the culprit this time) Mr. Brooke rose quickly and closed it himself, upon

which Miss Sadleir again looked at him and, as before, burst into tears. This time he left the room, uttering an exclamation that was more forcible than polite. In real perplexity Mrs. Brooke tried to soothe the sensitive lady and to apologise for whatever offence might have been committed.

'It is my own fault, Mrs. Brooke, I know it is, that Mr. Brooke would not ask me to shut the door to-night. I was foolish to show that I was so much hurt yesterday, and have regretted it ever since. But now to feel that he has not forgiven me, and, in fact, is really displeased with me, is very trying. I feel it so deeply that, much as it would grieve me to leave you and the dear children, I think we had better part.'

This was the ultimate result, as might be expected, when poor Mrs. Brooke's sympathy and patience were both fairly exhausted.

The world is apt to take most people at a lower valuation than that which they set upon themselves, and this, in the case of governesses, often makes them foolishly touchy and *exigéante* in requiring deference where they can obtain it. Absurd little etiquettes with their pupils are rigidly adhered to, a sort of exaction perfectly sure to raise antagonism, if not dislike, in the mind of a child.

One great grievance against the governess in a large family of children of my acquaintance was the manner in which she always tried to separate the girls from their brothers. Once, when one of the boys came home from Harrow, and rushed into the schoolroom to see his sister, a formal complaint was made to his parents of his impertinence in speaking to his sisters without Miss Horne's permission. This, and some neglect on the part of the house-keeper, produced, to my astonishment, a letter consisting of four sheets of note-paper to the mother of the children, who told me that her heart sank within her whenever she saw one of these missives on her dressing-table at night, and that now she always deferred the perusal of it till the next day, as it invariably cost her a night's rest. The habit of complaints in writing from

those who live under one roof is one of the most trying inflictions that can be borne.

On the other hand it is true that many people are greatly deficient in the courtesy that is due towards any lady whatever position she may hold. In some cases this takes the form of marked neglect, in others it is displayed by a semi-patronising manner which, to a person of refinement, cannot fail to be offensive. The anomalous position of a governess is necessarily a difficult one, but a quiet, reticent manner, if persevered in, cannot fail, in the end, to command respect. Occasionally the manner of governesses towards young men, even to the elder brothers of their pupils, is by no means sufficiently circumspect, and if a governess lays herself open to the charge of being considered a flirt, she has no right to complain either of inattention or neglect on the part of her employers.

The isolation of the life of a governess in a nobleman or gentleman's family is so great that it requires really strong health and spirits to resist the morbid feelings it naturally engenders. Among the middle classes her lot is usually a happier one. The loneliness of a governess's life is taken but little account of by her employers, and yet a little reflection would show how very trying, even under the happiest circumstances, it must be.

To toil every morning through three or four consecutive hours in teaching children that at best are certain to be more or less troublesome, when the only recreation for the weary or aching head is a solitary walk or companionless leisure in the dull schoolroom while the children play in the garden or ride, requires the most absorbing interest in their studies and improvement not to be both depressing and irksome in the extreme.

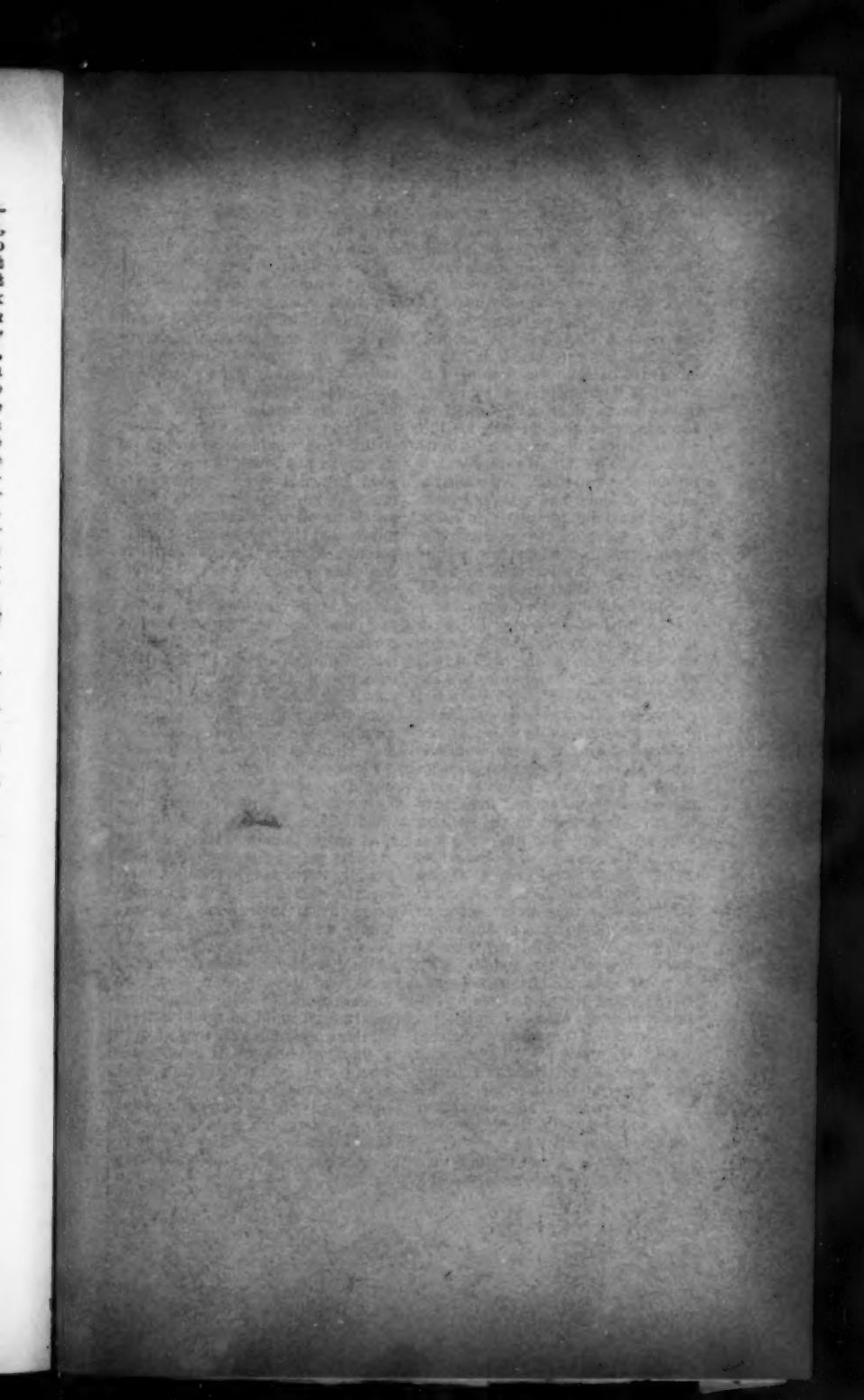
To possess warm affections and a heart full of sympathy for those around, and to know that there is no willing recipient for the love and interest we are yearning to bestow, is as chilling as Wordsworth's dreary simile of 'a forsaken bird's nest filled with snow;' and this is the fate

of many governesses who, in consequence, 'eat their own hearts' in solitary musings. When joining the family circle at the children's early dinner, or in the drawing-room in the evening, she is equally made to feel that she has no share in the conversation that goes on around her; and her presence is as much ignored as if she were nothing but a part of the furniture of the room, unless her services are required to accompany singing, to play for the young people to dance, or to ransack portfolios for drawings which no one else can find. With what a feeling of relief she returns to her own room, only prompted to leave it by a sense of the necessity for some change of scene in the unvaried monotony of her life—a life which must affect the health and spirits of any one who does not possess a fund of buoyancy or some inner motive strong enough to produce indifference to the neglect that surrounds her. To produce this indifference it would be far better if girls were educated from childhood to be governesses as a recognised profession, and if there were the same means and opportunities of testing their proficiency as exist abroad. Persons trained from early life to look forward to the position of a governess as a profession and honourable means of subsistence, would adapt themselves to it and accept it with all its advantages and annoyances purely as a matter of business. Conscious of their own efficiency, they would feel sure of receiving an adequate remuneration for their labours, and the over-sensitiveness that now arises from a position that varies with each individual and is never very clearly defined, would be prevented. Ladies with broken-down fortunes or unhappy homes are not qualified for the life of a governess. They carry their own troubles with them to overshadow happy homes.

To treat any one to whom is confided the most important possible

trust, such as the education of children, with discourtesy and neglect, is both irrational and cruel; and to expect children, whose discernment is always quick, to obey and respect a person whom their parents look upon as an inferior and not worth the smallest consideration, is simply absurd. If a governess is qualified, both by education and the position she holds, to form a part of the family, she is also entitled to be treated as a lady and with as much civility and kindness as would be shown to any other guest. The good influence which many governesses might exercise over their pupils is often completely undermined by the behaviour of their parents towards them. This is doubtless a severe trial to a governess who is working conscientiously for the improvement of her pupils, and must cause neglect and want of consideration to be doubly mortifying. Children are apt to follow the example of their elders, however slow they may be in obeying injunctions which they dislike or consider unimportant. If greater courtesy and kindness were shown towards governesses by their employers they would probably be less inclined to look out for slights which are frequently the result of thoughtlessness rather than of malice, and the extreme sensitiveness which is universally attributed to them as their especial characteristic would disappear. Their intercourse with any family in which they might be placed would then be easy and natural, and their occasional absence from the drawing-room would no longer be hailed with delight, and parents and children would not feel on these occasions as if they enjoyed a common holiday. If governesses would only be natural and genial, not perpetually considering their own dignity nor for ever anticipating affronts, their life would be one of less isolation, and they would no longer be regarded as 'necessary evils.'







Drawn by William Brimston.]

THE LAST BOAT OF THE SEASON FROM MARGATE

THE LAST BOAT.

THE last boat out from Margate pier!
 Farewell to folly and unreason!
 Kind reader, please to drop a tear
 And bid adieu to Margate season.
 The jetty's left behind, beyond
 The scene seems anything but pleasant,
 A long firewell to Spiers and Pond,
 And fascinating Royal Crescent.

Prone are our castles on the sand,
 Knocked over by the sea invading;
 Bluff equinoctial gales command
 An end of matutinal spading.
 The proud proprietors of goats,
 And donkey boys, have ceased their rackets,
 Grim salts sit straddling on their boats,
 And look far bluer than their jackets.

Alone the little schooner lies
 With not a cockney left to man it;
 In vain the cursing carman cries
 For riders round the Isle of Thanet.
 Hush'd are the revelries of night—
 The song and chorus on the jetty—
 No longer Luna sheds her light
 On Harry whispering to Hetty!

No more the antiquaries sob,
 For calm of Canterbury's cloister;
 Smart maidens vainly offer Cobb
 To wash down the neglected oyster.
 A sorry change creeps o'er the town,
 For all reside, and no one lodges,
 And Margate merciless must own
 The undivided sway of Hodges.

The last boat out! once welcomed waves
 Have turned their backs upon us truly;
 The swell most certainly behaves
 In manner rough and most unruly.
 This husbands' boat, which in the sun
 Dear wives excitedly have sighted,
 Takes back both wife and little one
 To home and Camden Town delighted.

Ah! love, we'll weather out the squall!
 Maybe the little ones are weary,
 Still home is sweetest after all,
 And autumn fires are very cheery.
 The last boat out from Margate pier—
 When our short holiday is over—
 Brings you and me to haven, dear!
 And all the little pets to clover!

C. W. S.

A RUN TO THE SOUTH AFTER CREATURE-COMFORTS.

III.

ONCE installed in the comfortable *établissement* or *Thermes* of Dr. Pujade, at Amélie-les-Bains, we took at starting a liberal allowance of slumber, which was no more than needful to restore our strength after the stifling and woeful night passed at Perpignan, where, as I have recorded in penitential terms, out of unlucky but not blamable economy, we went to a second-class hotel, and were punished for our mistaken thrift. There are other hotels or inns at Amélie, and another thermal establishment *for civilians* (the *Thermes Hermabessière*), which has been bought up by Pereire the banker, and is now called after his name. 'For civilians,' because the French government has installed at Amélie an *Etablissement Militaire*, admirably organised and conducted, for the reception, on a liberal and kindly footing, of members of the army and navy, both officers and men, who are likely to derive benefit from treatment by the thermal waters. This is an institution quite apart from the rest. The State has a hot spring of its own, acquired by purchase, whose waters are brought to the hospital, across the ravine of the torrent Mondony, by an aqueduct, which, at the same time, presents the town with a handsome foot-bridge. There are gardens, walks, pleasure-grounds, in short, a complete walled-in territory, to which access by the public is not indiscriminately granted, and from which exit by its inmates is still more scantily accorded. It is a model of what such a benevolent institution, maintained by a nation, ought to be. Further than this it does not fall in with our task to say more of it, now or here.

Of the other establishments for the reception of civilians, not knowing them, I cannot speak; but were we to go back to Amélie, should certainly return to the *Thermes Pujade*, if only for its terraces, its shady and romantic walks, some

leading into the gorge whence the torrent issues, others zigzagging up the mountain which is one of the walls of the aforesaid gorge. The obliging and civil ways of its managers and servants would be another reason for not deserting it for any of its rivals; and certainly it cannot be called expensive. The terms, when you take whatever rooms happen to be empty and convenient to the direction to let you have, are, I fancy, 5fr. 50c. per head, per day, for board and lodging. We paid the smallest trifle more—a fraction less than 6 fr. per head, per day; but then we had rooms on the first floor, opening on to a terrace all to ourselves, commanding a cheerful and picturesque view of the torrent, the bridges, a portion of the town, the military establishment, and the surrounding mountains. It is a view that would make a pleasing picture, with little help from 'composition.' Add to this another advantage at the time of year, a northern aspect, in more or less strict accordance with the points of the compass, saving us from the intrusions of unnecessary sunbeams.

The dietary supplied to the guests—who here, as in other like establishments in the Pyrenees, are generally spoken of as '*baigneurs*,' or '*bathers*,' whether they bathe or not—consists of two copious meals a day; breakfast at half-past ten and dinner at half-past five. Things called for at other times in the day, as milk, coffee, &c., are extras, but by no means ruinous. In the price of the meals is included an ample sufficiency of the wine of the surrounding hills—a strong, dark-coloured, heady liquid, but making a wholesome beverage if sufficiently diluted with water. The other bathers drank this at breakfast as well as at dinner; we asked for tea instead, and had it, of fair quality, without additional charge.

For ourselves, and we think according to most English tastes, this

breakfast is both too heavy and too late, spoiling the morning, and the dinner too early, shortening the afternoon, and leaving an evening of inconvenient length in a latitude where night falls early, and in a place where there is no public amusement except the café. We should greatly prefer the materials composing the breakfast or déjeuner to be divided between a light breakfast at an early hour, and a luncheon, say at one. Not an ounce more of provision would be needed, and the lunch could be strictly confined to cold things. It would be hardly fair, so far south, to keep a cook over his stewpans and his broils all day long; the only additional trouble would be the laying the table-cloth, and the waiting, twice instead of once. A one o'clock luncheon would allow the dinner to be deferred till half-past six or seven, to the great relief of labouring stomachs requiring rest, and affording great assistance to those who find a difficulty in filling up the hours between after-dinner and bed-time. But half-past ten and half-past five are the table d'hôte hours of the country, old-established institutions, meal times of the Medes and Persians, an attempt to change which might be followed by domestic revolt. English families, too, often take apartments or hire furnished houses in town, where they can eat as seemeth them best. We, having smaller pretensions, and making a shorter stay, did at Amélie as Amélie does.

The fare can be best judged of from a bill or two. Let us take, at hazard, June 16. Breakfast:

Eggs, sur le plat, i. e. broken, without breaking the yolks, into a well-buttered dish, and then put into an oven till the whites are set; sliced saucisson, or polony sausage:

Beef-steak, bread-crumbed; fried potatoes:

Salted olives, like those we get in England, as a hors d'œuvre, kickshaw, or cranny-filler:

Neck and breast of lamb, stewed brown:

Cheese, cherries, biscuits.

* For these and other dishes marked with an asterisk, please consult 'Wholesome Fare.'

Dinner: Potage Paysanne. Good stock (perhaps made at the expense of some of the meats served afterwards), with vegetables and bread-dice in it. A pleasant variation of Julienne.*

Croquettes de volaille. Balls of minced fowl and hard egg rolled in bread crumbs, and fried. Garnished with (very well) fried parsley. Croquettes and little patties are great favourites with the hotel keepers who give you your dinner without your victuals, because they use up scraps, and count as 'a dish,' though they are only a mouthful. Not that we eschew them utterly. They are very well to play with an instant, if you have enough good food to eat besides:

Grenadines de veau, à l'oseille. Slices of veal, stewed white, and laid on a purée of sorrel:

Poulet à la financière—more or less. Roast chicken, with a rich ragout containing stewed olives and the livers of the fowls:

Green haricots, French fashion:*

Roast fillet of beef; lettuce salad: Rice pears. Rice, boiled, sweetened, and flavoured, rolled into the shape of a pear, fried in sugared bread crumbs, with a strip of preserved angelica inserted to imitate the stalk, and served on a bed of currant jelly;

Strawberries, biscuits, cheese, &c. Our note of next day's breakfast (June 17) is this:

Bacon omelette;* light and good: Well-broiled mutton cutlets; fried potatoes:

Fried whiting (caught at Colli-vure or Port Vendree):

Paté de lièvre.* Hare paté. A thick layer of what we should call potted meat (in variety) baked between two crusts. Not good:

Asparagus. Remember the date, and the latitude (that of Rome). Green, run-up, almost branching specimens, which would be instantly 'disqualified' at an English Horticultural Show, but quite eatable and wholesome, nevertheless:

Apricots de St. Jean, Midsummer apricots. Well flavoured, but the smallest I ever saw; pears, cheese, butter, biscuits.

Apricots are comparatively scarce and dear this year, in consequence of adverse spring weather, fetching fifteen sous the kilo, or about three-pence the pound, whereas in ordinary years they may be had for six or seven sous the kilo, not a penny halfpenny per pound. With these and other comestibles the principal establishments at Amélie are supplied by peasant purveyors, who are in the habit of bringing certain articles to the house. What small market there is, is held in the little Place in front of the Hôtel Pereire, at the exemplary hour of five in the morning, or earlier. 'Tis not 'the voice of the sluggard' that cheapens their wares. But there is no want of irregular supplies. Thus, on certain and uncertain days, a smart covered cart, with *BOUCHERIE* inscribed on its varnished sides, drives into the Place, takes out its horse, and retails sundry joints of flesh.

With another specimen of our régime we will cease to bring the water into your mouth. Certainly, the cooking, on the whole, was good, especially as it had to be done on economical principles. But even great artists have their inequalities and their weaknesses. Malibran was vainer of her dancing than her singing. Our chef here one day produced an omelette soufflée, pronounced admirable by general acclamation, and received compliments in accord with the universal suffrage. Next day, to crown his triumph, he sent up what he supposed a masterpiece, a something between plum-pudding and syllabub, which obtained for him not only a great drop in public esteem, but what is worse in France, a hearty laugh. If he had only given us another good omelette soufflée, pure and simple, all would have gone right. But so few people know when to let well alone, which reminds me of a young gentleman who obtained a grand after-dinner success by imitating a bluebottle fly, a creaking pump, a knife-grinder's wheel, and a few something else of the kind. Elated, he declared he could do better than

that. So, rising and concentrating his faculties, he at the same time made a speech and a fool of himself.

June 19. Breakfast: Eggs, sur le plat:

Broiled mutton cutlets; fried potatoes:

Cold boiled whiting garnished with mayonnaise sauce, strips of anchovy, and lettuce salad:

Cold veal, in slices:

Apricots (de St. Jean), cherries, Roquefort and goats'-milk cheeses, butter, and biscuits.

Dinner: It was on this occasion, or another, that after the last bell had sounded, nobody would obey its summons. The guests continued idling about in groups, on the terraces, in the garden, or on benches in front of the house, from which the sun had retreated. 'Le diner est servi,' 'Dinner is served,' the head waiter shouted. Same inattention and indifference to the invitation. After waiting in vain for the people to come, the same individual, who is a bit of a humorist, again roared at the top of his voice, 'Le diner est refroidi,' 'The dinner is cold!' The effect was magical; in a trice everybody was seated in front of his respective 'couvert' or knife and fork.

Soup, pâte d'Italie; vermicelli stamped into stars and garters:

An enormous eel caught in the torrent Mondony, *our* contribution to the feast, à la Tartare.*

Pigeons stewed with green peas and white onions, whole.*

Sheeps' brains and sweetbread, with asparagus tips in cream sauce: French beans, French fashion.*

Roast leg of mutton and salad:

Rice pudding:

Apricots, cherries, biscuits, cakes, and cheese.

We went to Amélie expecting to find it hot, but, believing that, if it became too hot to hold us, we could easily retreat to a lower temperature by shifting to the higher elevation of Le Vernet, sometimes called Vernet-les-Bains, on the other side of the grand mountain mass of the Canigou. We found it warm, certainly; but the warmth was fresh,

* For these and other dishes marked with an asterisk, please consult 'Wholesome Fare.'

elastic, and shady, with a sea-breeze, which, springing from the Mediterranean, swept along the valley of the Tech, the larger torrent—it can't be called a river—which receives the smaller torrent, the Mondony, which issues from the gorge at whose mouth Dr. Pujade's thermal establishment is situated. But be it remembered, that, at the very same date, people in the north of France were shivering and shaking, complaining of deplorable and abominable cold; they had not seen the sun for ever so long; mourning over blighted fruits, trembling for the harvest, and congratulating us on passing so severe a season in a milder climate. Nor were we alarmed by any prospect of excessive summer heat in consequence of our knowledge that the winters there are very forbearing; quite the contrary. Some climates, like that of Russia and North America, are extreme. The thermometer goes down to nowhere in winter, and up to the ceiling in the height of summer. In others, as in many small islands and peninsulas—the Isle of Wight, Cornwall, and the Scillies, to wit—it is perennially moderate in its rise and fall. Amélie belongs to neither. It is not cold in winter; but it is hot, when summer really comes.

Of the latter we can speak from personal experience; of the former from indications equally sure. Plants are a self-registering climatometer. A glance at them often gives you a description of the winters, and of the heat and degree of moisture of the winter months. Now the ricinus, or castor-oil plant, so largely employed with us in what is called 'sub-tropical gardening,' grows here into a tree or small shrub, being cut down by slight frosts every eight or ten years. Oleanders are as luxuriant in the open ground as lilacs and laburnums are in England. Geraniums in vases are left out of doors to pass the winter on the walls or pedestals where they stand. Nothing in the plant line is taken in-doors, for the good reason that people have nowhere to put them, still less any notion of how to take care of them. Plants

that cannot support the open air, night and day, all the year round, will not do for Amélie gardeners. Still, in the gardens there are to be seen several very elegant members of the acacia and mimosa families, grown to trees and shrubs, which have to pass the winter in green-houses with us. Almost every rock over which moisture trickles is hung with pendent fronds of the true Maidenhair Fern, *Adiantum capillus-veneris*.

Now, Le Vernet (pronounced by Pyreneans 'Vernette') is very anxious to compete with Amélie as a winter resort for invalids and idlers. The guide-books—though not Dr. Constantin James in his 'Treatise on the Mineral Waters of Europe'—speak of its winter as 'excessivement doux,' exceedingly mild, 'climat superbe.' But I could find no true Maidenhair there in its most sheltered and moistest nooks, a proof that its winter is not so mild as that of Amélie, although the aforesaid acacias are thrifty trees there, proving that its winter cannot be severe. At Amélie the great agave, or American aloe, will grow like a weed, if you let it. The orange-tree, the date-palm, the barbery-fig cactus, thrive in sunny corners protected from the wind, when planted, which few people care to do, because they are ornamental merely, and would occupy the room of profitable plants—of fig-trees, olives, standard apricots, peaches, almonds, and even of mulberries, whose leaves may be turned to account upon occasion. At Arles, and higher up the valley of the Tech, a dark-green but light-foliated tree, the micocoulter, *Celtis australis*, is largely cultivated as a permanent crop, being planted out in regular rows so thickly that little will grow beneath them. As soon as the young stems are tall and stout enough—to effect which they are regularly trimmed to the required height—they are cut down close to the ground, to make the famous perpignans, or whip-handles, such favourites with carters all over France. The stools speedily sprout again and the whip-tree soon furnishes another harvest. Whether

the horses suspect what is in store for them when they pass a plantation of peripignans is best known to their sagacious selves.

Carnations, which stand more heat and drought than English gardeners imagine, are grown at Amélie, as in Italy, in pots and on balconies, to make drooping plants, the effect of whose bright-tinted pendent flowers is very pretty when seen from below. On the hills around we find everlastings, a daphne with light-green regular foliage and small white, sweet-scented flowers, which would be not undeserving of a place in the greenhouse, but for the rage after 'show' and 'exhibition' plants. There are also some pretty cistuses, the still prettier *Convolvulus althaeoides*, the *Empetrum nigrum*, with its black, purple-staining berries; the *Coriaria myrtifolia*, sometimes employed for tanning leather, whence its name; the *Smilax aspera*, the *Asparagus acutifolius*, and a host of other wild flowers, new to fresh arrivals from the north.

The climate of the Oriental Pyrenees differs from that of the Low and the High Pyrenees. I had already seen both the latter, and expected to find in the former the same glorious forests and brawling gaves or brooks, which are the consequence of their greater share of rainfall, and perhaps (the trees) in some degree the cause of it. But in the Oriental Pyrenees it is heat, dryness, almost aridity, which have the upper hand in the valleys sloping towards the sea. It is the country of the olive and the vine, which delight in warmth and cannot bear superabundant moisture: in spite of which there are ferns in plenty. Some of these grow in crevices, or on the face of rocks, where water constantly drains, drops, or trickles. The common polypody and the *Asplenium Adiantum-nigrum* resist drought and heat better than I conceived they could. The bracken, *Pteris aquilina*, is very generally dispersed; but the male and the lady ferns are not common in the valley, though you meet with them in wet places and in elevated ravines, which are never thoroughly and completely dry.

Amongst our pastimes at Amélie were drives to interesting spots in the neighbourhood. The first, which but for the sunshine might have been taken as an easy walk, was to Palalda, a village with a Moorish name, which displays the type of not a few villages in the Oriental Pyrenees. It is built house above house, and narrow lane over narrow lane, against the side of a hill in the shape of a half-cone or pyramid, most symmetrical and picturesque when beheld from a distance, especially after dark at supper-time, when it becomes a tapering pile of twinkling lights. But in this case, as in so many others, 'tis distance that lends enchantment to the view. Enter, and you have to climb up and down through crooked, ill-smelling, irregular alleys, between houses which you would guess to be stables for animals rather than the dwellings of men and women in easy circumstances. Yet many Palaldans are 'propriétaires' or landowners, possessing each his 'vigne' or vineyard, which supplies enough wine for his year's consumption, with perhaps a small surplus to turn into cash.

Then there is Corsavy, further off, higher up, and in the opposite direction; a grand situation, striking to look at, equally striking to look from, and not less displeasing when looked into. After leaving Arles you have the novelty, to dwellers on plains, of a long drive continually up hill, with, of course, the very reverse the whole of the drive back. These descents are all operated by four-wheeled vehicles much in the same way. The 'mécannique,' or drag by friction, is screwed tight against one of the hind wheels, and down you trot at a smart brisk pace, except at sharp turns, where the centrifugal force might pitch you into the torrent below, or where the dry bed of a brook might break your springs if you did not slacken your pace a little. It is a local custom hereabouts to help the mécanique's retarding power by placing between it and the tire of the wheel an old shoe—a curé's old shoe, if to be had. It is a saving, too; for the shoe, instead of the drag, suffers

from the effects of the friction, being worn to shreds and tatters, or often dropping off before you get to the bottom of a long incline. I do not say that the practice raises the price of old shoes, but it certainly invests them with a value unknown in the other parts of Europe with which I am acquainted. Note that the old shoe so applied is a literal and practical interpretation of the French word 'sabot,' 'wooden shoe,' which also means a drag put under a wheel in the old-fashioned way instead of against it, and fastened to the carriage with a chain. The Germans also use the very same expression, 'rad-schuh,' for the very same thing.

From Corsavy you catch the Mediterranean on the horizon to the east, and get a good idea of the general formation of the Pyrenean chain, ridge after ridge, one behind the other, in long perspective, and all starting from one continuous, still loftier, central backbone, producing effects similar to those attempted by the 'wings' on which stage decoration relied so much in former days. But however eloquently or accurately scenery is described, a clear idea can only be conveyed by a sketch or drawing. I therefore give up *that*. Excellent truffles are found in the environs of Corsavy, up amongst the hills. The search for them, with a trained truffle dog, would amuse those not occupied with other botanical pursuits, and who would condescend to stoop to 'pot-hunting,' which in this case would be raised above vulgarity by the uncertainty and mystery attached to truffles. But truffle time is not yet come, and however pleased we might be to find them about Corsavy, we should be sorry to eat them cooked at Corsavy. Still, as the trip can be made between breakfast and dinner, it is worth taking at any season, weather permitting.

In all these carriage-drives and journeys I employed, and can honestly recommend, one Victor Olive (brown by name and brown by nature), 'Loueur de voitures et de chevaux de Selle, à Amélie-les-Bains.' He has competitors there, of whom I know nothing, for or against. I found him intelligent,

obliging, fair in his charges, a careful driver, and never tipsy or asleep on his box. He has little spirited horses who know their work—an important point in a mountainous country—and do it. As they have to earn their own oats and their master's bread and wine, they are a little hard worked, and are perhaps all the safer for that, the country being such that neither running away nor shying answer. Victor Olive is likewise adroit in the use of his long whip as a defensive weapon. On our way up to Le Vernet from Villefranche we all got out to walk. Our path was crossed by a villanous stoat, prowling in search of its supper of blood. Presently the whiplash exploded, like fulminating powder, on its back. The beast gave one long dying squeal, and was soon incapacitated from plundering more henroosts or bleeding more rats and rabbits to death. Lingerer behind, I saw gliding among the roadside herbage a long, thin, triangular-headed snake, marked cream-colour and black, after the pattern of a short-jointed cane, also hunting after prey. If a viper, which I doubt, it certainly was 'de la pire espèce,' not the flower of the family. Had Victor been near I would have got him to try the effect of his lash upon that; but he was forward, beside the horses, as was his place. So the snake glided on, and I let it. Whether, by whipping and driving, he is making a fortune I cannot tell. He once told me confidentially that he could not sleep unless he had eight or ten thousand francs of debts.

Another drive was to a border village or small town so near the Spanish frontier as to be convenient for those who want to pass to and fro, either for frequent business matters—'commerce interlope,' more practised formerly than now—or to change the residence to which letters and summonses may be addressed to them. Saint Laurent-de-Cerdans stands high, and commands a view, in nearly its complete altitude, of the enormous mass of the Canigou. Long before reaching it you leave the olives and vines

behind, and find chestnuts, poplars, and other less southern trees and shrubs. The grand characteristic of the drive, and that which retains longest hold of the memory, is the road winding steeply upwards amongst a labyrinth of hills, some composed of naked rock, others more or less sprinkled with vegetation, with a torrent filling one quarter of its bed, brawling deeper and ever deeper below. While coming down again, at full trot, with the shoe-clad drag pressing hard against one of the hind wheels, along a crinkum-crankum road, good enough in its way, but rarely broad enough for one carriage to pass another, and with a wall of rock on one side of it and a precipice without any parapet on the other, we experienced, of course not fear—nobody is ever afraid—but now and then a lively emotion, which we recommend to people who complain of feeling dull.

Less sensational is the drive to Perthus, or Pertus, again a frontier village, the last in France, and on the high road from Perpignan to Figueras and Barcelona. As forming one of the few passes across the Pyrenees, its elevation is much less than I had expected. After ascending you go down again, and then reascend before reaching Pertus. From thence the water-shed runs southwards, and soon conducts you into Spain, by a road commanded by Fort Bellegarde, on the top of a hill, for whose chequered history see the guide-books. We had thought of mounting to the fort on foot, for the sake of what *must* be a fine look-out therefrom, and the rare plants which *may* grow in the clefts of its pyramid of burning rock; but the heat, insuring our being swathed in wet linen, and our watches marking the brief interval available between our arrival and dinner-time, effectually dissuaded us. So we contented ourselves with walking across the frontier, and penetrating into Spain to the distance of at least a kilomètre. The limit is marked by posts or pedestals of masonry, on each side of the road, bearing, next France, the arms of Napoleon III., and on the Spanish side those of Isabel II.;

but the crown and the name of the fugitive queen had been stupidly chipped out of the marble by Spanish revolutionists, as if they could thereby erase from history and annihilate the fact that during so many, too long years, Isabel II. had been queen of Spain!

All the good done by iconoclasts, of whatever party, religious or political, is to deface public monuments and vex and annoy posterity. It would show more common sense to leave material records untouched, to tell their own tale, and receive, if they deserve it, condemnation. But the tale will be told, whether *they* tell or not. For nearly the last hundred years every dominant party in France has sought to destroy the monuments of its predecessors. Almost every considerable town possesses, smuggled away in cellars, garrets, and museums, when not destroyed, inscriptions, statues, bas-reliefs, and the like, which offend the peculiar notions of the reigning party. Thus, in the little town in which this is written (Port-Vendres, Pyrénées Orientales), in what might be a pretty square, stands a defaced and melancholy obelisk, the four sides of whose pedestal were once adorned with bas-reliefs representing the abolition of servitude in France, the restoration of the French Navy, the independence of America, and the liberty of maritime commerce. The restored Bourbons, thinking these sculptures too revolutionary, had them removed, and their place still remains vacant; but the abolition of feudal servitude and the independence of America are not the less notorious and undeniable. Of each successive government, trying to efface the memory of its predecessors, it may be said, with some pity for human folly, 'This is the dog, that worried the cat, that killed the rat, that ate the corn,' &c. &c., substituting empires, revolutions, restorations, for the above destructive animals.

In Spain our ladies found small, bright, sky-blue beetles, which they at first took for the flowers of the plants on which they found them. Those pretty insects seemed to go in pairs. We had already seen

them, or their facsimiles, in enamel, mounted in gold, to form pins, earrings, and necklaces, in the jewellers' shops when passing through Paris. On the French side our attention was attracted by what would have been a true forest of cork-trees clothing the hill sides, had they not been so sparsely scattered over them. Their soft, dark, tufted foliage, and the picturesque old twisted arms of the partially-denuded trees, made many of those individuals perfect studies. I am promised acorns in due season. It appears that they must be sown as soon as ripe, otherwise they lose their vitality. Note that the cork oak succeeds in England, in sheltered, well-drained spots not far from the sea, and well deserves a place on a lawn, if not as a profitable producer of cork, certainly as an ornamental evergreen shrub or tree, which has the merit of increasing in beauty the older it grows.

Worth peeping into at Amélie is the Catalan forge—all the forges herabouts are on the same principle—which would make our iron-founders smile at first sight, and interest them on closer inspection. It is an instance of producing, on a small scale and at considerable cost, an excellent article in limited quantities. They have iron ore here, but no coal. The smelting and everything else is effected by charcoal, brought down from the hills on mule-back. Water power, derived from the torrent, crushes the ore, blows the bellows, and makes the hammers beat. The forge works night and day, with a staff of some twenty men in all, divided into relays of six hours each, or five men as the working quorum. Many blacksmiths' shops are more strongly manned. The result is, nails and other small hardware held in high esteem, and especially the droll, sharp-pointed Catalan knives which cut bread and bacon so well, and sometimes slash an adversary's skin. It is curious that, in spite of the heat from the charcoal, one of the inner walls of the Amélie forge should be beautifully draped with the maiden-hair fern—a bright green embroi-

dery on a ground of black. But the whole bit would make an effective picture—men, mixed qualities of light, walls, ore, ferns, bellows, hammers, and all.

This forge stands in the lower town, at the bottom of one of the primitive streets, in which the women seem to live retired, somewhat after the manner of Arab women. Its quality as a habitation resembles that of most if not all the villages and the older quarters of Southern towns—consisting of rough stone unplastered doorways and staircases; or, if plastered, unpainted and unpapered. Ruins serving for the retreat of jackals and owls present much the same appearance. A Northerner would have a great deal to do before he could possibly instal himself in such places. The living-rooms are equally rude and unfinished with the entrances, suggesting the idea of temporarily inhabited caravanserais, which it was worth no man's while to set in order, rather than of permanent residences, in which the present dwellers will probably spend their lives.

The fires of St. John's Eve took us by surprise. They are the remnant of some old ritual, probably older than Christianity. At night-fall, in numerous nooks about the town, bonfires are made, bright but brief, blazing up for a while, and then sinking down into ruddy embers. The children jump through the flames, as a point of honour and an indispensable duty, reminding one of the heathen custom of passing through the fire in honour of Moloch, which need not necessarily mean burning children alive. What makes the practice striking is, that each surrounding village, high on the hill-tops, has its own proper fire or fires; and so spark calls forth spark, and flame answers to flame, all the more impressively that their duration is so brief. They tell you, as is told the Pope on his coronation day, while blazing flax is burnt before him, 'Sancte pater, sic transit gloria mundi,'—'Holy father, like the flame of flax the glory of the world passes away.' Then follows a torchlight

procession, with a meritorious band of Catalan music, resembling whistles and bagpipes, very nasal in one, but spirited and operative in its local colouring, which is decidedly pastoral and mountaineery. The procession goes round the town, visiting each fire, and summoning the population to dance in the Place. The dance music is good; and this particular band would, I think, achieve a success either in London or Paris, especially if illustrated by a ballet performing the true Catalan dance, which has now degenerated into a riotous galop and round. At certain intervals the music pauses on the key-note, much as when the bagpipe gives a long wheeze. This is done to allow the performance of a feat which *ought* to be thus executed. At the proper moment the lady springs in the air, and seats herself on her partner's outstretched hand; he then raises her, and holds her aloft as long as his strength and the laws of equilibrium allow. To do this neatly requires considerable practice, very amusing, no doubt, to the parties concerned.

But as few are endowed with the requisite skill to catch the fair one on her—say 'place behind,' unpossessed by the cherubim;—in order to avoid indecorous falls, as well as competitive jealousy, two young men now-a-days unite, between them, to elevate their two partners (or perhaps one partner only, taking them by turns), supporting them by the waist. Certainly this popping up of female busts by lamplight, while the music gives a long-drawn sigh, has a droll effect, much more comical than graceful, although it be a chairing of the member in celebration of Youth and sometimes Plainness's triumph. At any rate the ladies take it kindly—and economically. When the fair one is thirsty she does not ask her cavalier to 'stand' anything, but quietly walks to the fountain and drinks her fill by catching the jet of water in her open mouth—another custom derived from Catalan antiquity.

Next morning (St. John's Day)

the mules and donkeys, in their Sunday clothes, go to high mass, to get blessed. I am not sure that they all go, here, though in some villages they do, with a few exceptions, intended as a punishment for naughtiness during the previous twelvemonth, and as a warning to other wicked donkeys. As the *dames de la Halle*, on grand occasions, depute the comeliest of their body to kiss the Emperor, so it is possible that the quadrupeds of Amélie charge a commission to receive the 'Pax Vobiscum.' We had the honour of beholding one of the blessed mules, who had the pleasure of carrying (we hoped for that day only) a couple of riders, and of being preceded and followed by musical sounds and instruments, if not exactly by music. More dancing and lady-lifting day after day, till we wondered how human legs and arms could stand it!

St. John brought with him a rise of the thermometer. It was really warm, nay, absolutely hot, with that pricking sensation in the sunbeams which removes all doubt as to *where* you are. In the north you believe in the undulatory or wave-theory of the nature of light; in the south you are inclined to side with Newton, who held it to be a stream of little particles projected, like small grape-shot, from the sun. The respective temperatures of different latitudes often arise from different causes. The *mildness* of northern climates, when it exists, mostly arises from the prevailing *winds*, which convey warmth almost always derived from the sea. Here the *heat* is derived directly from the sun, seldom screened by clouds; and as rain is rare, the accumulated sun-heat is but little diminished by evaporation. Buildings, roads, rocks, the soil itself, become saturated with heat, which is sensible by night as well as by day. Some winds, as the mistral, temper and equalize its effects for the moment, but they do not cut off the continued influx and supply of solar heat. Thus the north may be warmed, although the sky remains cloudy; while the south is sensibly cooled by a few sunless or

rainy days. On the other hand, while the sky remains clear and a hot wind blows, their combined effects may be easily imagined. You suffer a general listlessness, prostration, good-for-nothingness, inducing siestas and a unanimous 'shutting up of shop' both literal and figurative.

We spent our time at Amélie-les-Bains with much enjoyment and no disagreeables. Our fellow-guests were all pleasant, well-behaved, and a few superior people in respect to abilities and acquirements, if not in worldly wealth. We were the only Britishers; I do not say in the house—because it consists of several *corps de bâtiment*—but in the thermal establishment. A few were Spaniards; but the majority, French Southerners, came from Perpignan, Montpellier, Toulon, and other broiling towns, to breathe in the shade and rinse out their constitutions in 'the waters.' We noticed that young married and engaged men, unaccompanied by their wives or intendeds, wore 'alliances,'—wedding or engaged rings—on the *annulaire*, or ring-finger of the left hand. This custom I hold to be considerate and merciful, especially when the young gentleman is possessed of superior attractions. It warns young ladies not to waste their time by falling in love with other ladies' property. It says, 'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's husband, nor anything that is hers.' If they choose to break their susceptible hearts by entertaining hopes where hope is none, at least they do so with their eyes open. The alliance ring tells them, 'Mademoiselle, don't look at me too much, although I am a handsome fellow. I don't wish to be unnecessarily cruel. If I have been a lady-killer I am now bound in honour to retire from practice. I am very sorry for you, but the market is over. I am ticketed "Sold;" that is, I don't belong to myself. Think of me and regard me as if I existed not.'

For myself, the principal objection to table d'hôte breakfasts and dinners is that the former are too copious—but you need eat no more

than you like while remaining stationary and sedentary, and can take all you like during periods of active exercise—and that the latter go off much too quickly. As soon as your plate is empty a fresh one is pitched into its place. Dish succeeds dish with such rapidity that you have no time to discuss it, scarcely to chew it. A moment's conversation with a neighbour inevitably causes you to be behind time. You find yourself distanced by your commensals, who have finished their portion before yours is begun. Now, this is feeding, and not eating, as understood by common sense and Brillat-Savarin. If, perchance, you reach the table d'hôte five minutes too late it is a heavy task, requiring an enormous power of pitching in and bolting, to work your way up to the rest and take your place in the race beside them. The wisest plan is not to attempt it, but either to wait till all is over and get what you can, or to have the portions which fall to your share placed before you in a row, and so take them at your leisure, leaving the others to go on at the regulation pace, paying no attention to what they are doing, but allowing them to come in at the goal before you have half got over the course. The evil—if other people besides myself have ever thought it such—is almost unavoidable. The service of a large establishment would be impeded if a table d'hôte dinner lasted too long; and its brevity is less felt by persons who take their after-dinner drink at the café instead of at table. They are not a bit the more temperate in their potations for that; because, when taking your wine 'like a gentleman,' there is a limit which may not be exceeded, either in quantity or time; whereas, at the café, men may and do sit from their rising from table till the café shutters are closed. Dining à la carte and restaurant dinners are not open to this objection; you have a right to take your time; and you greatly undervalue the importance of a good digestion if you do not take it. A mean, and a happy one, when compared with the ultra-

acceleration of table d'hôte eating occasionally witnessed, is to get a side-table to yourselves when the house is full, and there contrive a lingering eddy of the dishes which sweep down the torrent of the central stream. While engaged in one of these gastronomic steeple-chases we promise ourselves a little dinner at home, composed of three nice dishes and dessert, which shall cost altogether a couple of hours, with pleasant chat in the interludes. Nay, decent street music, not too discordant, if present, should not depart without recompence.

The director of the post-office at Amélie gave me a little lesson, which I record for the benefit of your future correspondents in France. I took the first of these 'Runs to the South' to the post, stamped, as usual, for that quantity of MS.—30 centimes, or threepence. In general, you are requested not to put such packets and newspapers into the letter-box—for fear of choking the mouth—but to deliver them at the wicket-window. I delivered mine, telling the director it was not correspondence, but manuscript for the printers, which, by the international postal convention, paid postage as *imprimés*, or 'printed matter. He said I could not send MS. in that way without an authorization from the General Direction. I replied that I could, and had sent many such packets from other post-offices in France without a word, having the right to a weight up to 120 grammes for 30 centimes. He rejoined that he knew his 'règlement,' but, having to make up his bag, had no time then to show me Article. Still I might send the packet as 'papiers d'affaires' for 50 centimes, which gave me the right to 500 grammes. I thought the additional twopence well spent to save the post and escape a long discussion on post-office law; so I affixed the additional stamp, and took my departure.

Soon afterwards, the postman,

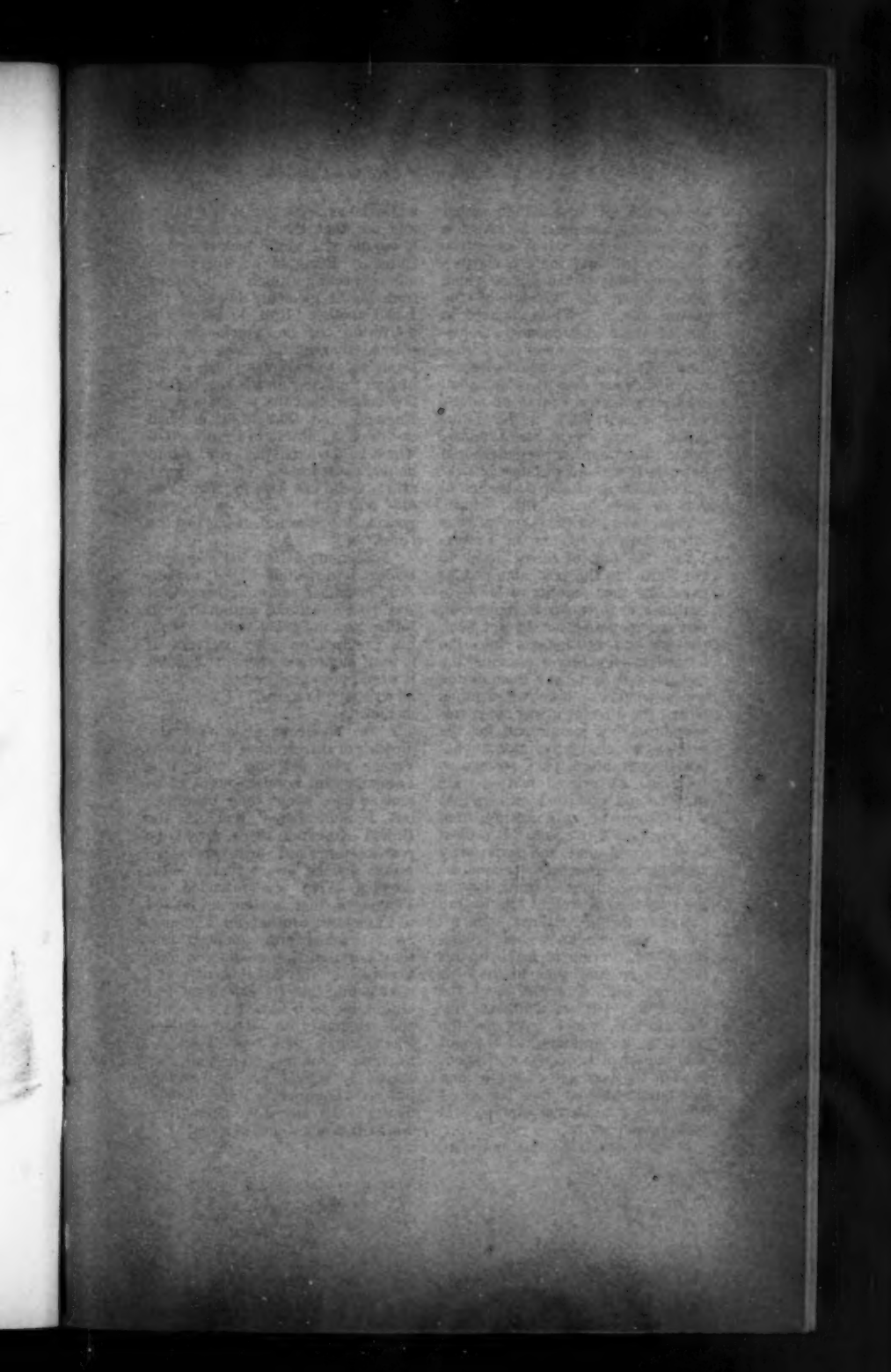
while delivering a registered letter, told me that the Director wished to see me, if I would look in at the Bureau. Being in no hurry, and not expecting much amusement from his 'règlement,' I waited till I had another 'Run' to take. On delivering it, he graciously explained that he had been in error about the 50 centimes; that, in the hurry of making up his bag, he had not noticed that the packet was for England, and that what he had said was applicable to France. On which he tendered the 30 c. stamp he had caused me to affix. 'No,' I said; 'I did not wish for that. You did not put it into your own pocket; the government has had the benefit of it.'

'Mais, non; I took the stamp off before I despatched the packet. But,' he added, resuming his official and post-directorial authority, 'in future you must not write London, but Londres, on your packets. If it were any other town in England it would not signify; but this must be written "Londres." C'est réglementaire.'

I was about to reply that any director or directress of the post in France who did not know that London meant Londres ought to be sent at once about their business; but I remembered that in the United Kingdom there might be post-masters and mistresses who would not be aware that a letter directed Wien was intended for Vienna, or that another addressed to Firenze was meant for Florence. So I thanked him, assuring him that I was always anxious strictly to observe the 'règlement,' and recollecting that the catechism had taught me to behave myself lowly and reverently to all my betters. Please notice that I profit by the teaching. For me, at present, 217 Piccadilly stands, not in London, but in 'Londres.' What does it matter? By any other name London streets smell just as sweet.

E. S. D.

(To be continued.)





THE LOVE-BIRD OF THE WEST.

(See the Poem)

THE LOVE-BIRD OF THE WEST.

HAST brought my secret safe to me?
 Hath none beheld thee on thy way?
 Say, Love-bird of the West, ah say,
 What jealous eyes encountered thee.

Those mettled winds that bore thy plumes
 Foamed the glad waters as they went
 With colours of the sunset
 The orange breath thine arrow perfumed.

Did none detect the rose-mare path?
 Did none discern the whiter waves?
 Did no sea-monsters in their caves
 Track thy light course along their path?

Burst there not forth a rarer light
 From shimmer of the bright page east?
 The ruffled dove-eyes as it passed
 Broke they no silence of the night?

Did no heart-pulse of the pine-wood beat
 To the music of thy silver string?
 While the soft sways of thy wings
 Chinked off to the mountain, round?

Hast brought me enough safe to me?
 Hast thou loved, and art thou gone?
 Say, Love-bird of the West, ah say,
 What jealous eyes encountered thee.

What mortal did thy starting see?
 Who marked thee first to heaven rise,
 Where, whirling giddy with thy pin,
 Thy vision pierced the clouds to me?

Did any know, did any dream,
 The hand that laid it on thy breast?
 Did any note the strange music
 That sounded in the swallow's scream?

The swallow hath a twofold fate:
 Now light, now dark, and who shall say
 What tale those changeful lines convey
 To the keen eyes of watchful eyes?

The drowsing winds for ever wait
 To hear the shrilly swallow cry
 The daffodil follows rise and set
 To catch her voice by wood and brake.



THE LOVERBIRD OF THE WEST.

Wm. H. Davis.

THE LOVE-BIRD OF THE WEST.

HAST brought my secret safe to me?
 Hath none beheld thee on thy way?
 Say, Love-bird of the West, ah say
 What jealous eyes encountered thee.

Those mettled winds that bore thy plumes
 Foamed the glad waters as they went;
 With odours of the roses blent.
 The orange breath this scroll perfumes.

Did none detect the rose more rath?
 Did none discern the whiter waves?
 Did no sea-monsters in their caves
 Track thy light course along their path?

Burst there not forth a rarer light
 From shimmer of the bright page cast?
 The ruffled dove-cotes as it passed
 Broke they no silence of the night?

Did no heart-pulse of the pine-wood beat
 To the music of its silken string?
 With the soft whisper of thy wing,
 Didst tell of it to the mountain, sweet?

Hast brought my secret safe to me?
 Hath none beheld thee on thy way?
 Say, Love-bird of the West, ah say
 What jealous eyes encountered thee.

What mortal did thy starting see?
 Who marked thee first to heaven arise,
 Where, wheeling giddy with thy prize,
 Thy vision pierced the clouds to me?

Did any know, did any dream,
 The hand that laid it on thy breast?
 Did any note the strange unrest
 That sounded in the swallow's scream?

The swallow hath a twofold face,
 Now light, now dark, and who shall say
 What tale those changeful hues convey
 To the keen eyes of watchful space?

The drowsing winds for ever wake
 To hear the shrilly swallow call;
 The dullard billows rise and fall
 To catch her voice by wood and brake.

The Love-bird of the West.

Say, will not sunshine and soft rain
Together meet in rainbow smiles,
When to the circle of the isles
The tell-tale swallow comes again?

Hast brought my secret safe to me?
Hath none beheld thee on thy way?
Say, Love-bird of the West, ah say
What jealous eyes encountered thee.

The west-borne waves from tropic seas,
Will they not murmur of his name?
Will not the angry winds proclaim
His flying sails that kiss the breeze?

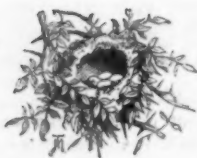
The sun that lit thy parting flight
Hath knocked at every lattice-pane,
And, meeting him on hill and plain,
The curious moon hath snatched his light.

And she will wander through the world,
No cloud before her treacherous face,
And note thy tender wings unfurled,
And spy my treasure in its place.

Hast thou no voice? Thy weary eyes
Wear a strange look, half doubt, half fear,
As though the prying stars were near
In this still hour when daylight dies.

Slumber's soft shadow round thee clings.
Thou hear'st me not. Ay! sink to rest;
Lay down thy burthen on my breast
And hide my joy beneath thy wings.

ELEANORA L. HERVEY.



SKETCHES IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

NO. III.—THE FRONT OPPOSITION BENCH.

IT is stated that the late Sir Robert Peel, who used regularly to attend Whitehall Chapel, one day heard an intensely-Tory preacher select as his text the words, 'And all the people were scattered and peeled.' Sir Robert was extremely disgusted; but, nevertheless, the words were singularly applicable and true. Ever since that great political tergiversation, it may be said of the Tory party that they have been scattered and peeled. That large hurt has never been really cured. The Tories were in the position of the Ten Thousand Greeks, who suddenly found one morning that they were bereft of all their generals; who were not, indeed, assassinated, but had gone off in a body to the enemy's camp. It was seen even that the best hope of Conservatism was not in the reconstruction of the party but in a reconciliation with the discarded and alienated leaders. The acute, sagacious mind of Lord Lyndhurst seems to have comprehended this, and he sought to effect a reconciliation between the Nominalist and the Realistic section of the Conservatives. But a reconciliation was impossible. Things had passed which could not be forgiven in this present political world. Sir Robert was cold, proud, and wounded to the quick; the Tories were haunted by the demons of despair and revenge. It was not likely that even Lord Lyndhurst's most brilliant pupil and closest friend, Mr. Disraeli, would welcome a change which would eject him from that foremost political grade which had fallen to him. Lord George Bentinck, indeed, was the Ariens suddenly improvised at this great emergency, but Mr. Disraeli was the lieutenant of Ariens. Since that time, however, the Tories have never had a majority in the House or the country. Several times they have been in tantalizing proximity to a majority, within a dozen votes more or less. But if ever they

have attained a majority, it has been by coalition, and if ever they have governed it has been by sufferance. We know not what chances may yet be evolved in the political kaleidoscope, but the party for ever getting on for a quarter of a century, has emphatically been scattered and peeled. At the present moment their lances are broken and their banners torn, and they are lying prostrate on the political lake, like fallen angels. Mr. Disraeli has told us that he is 'on the side of the angels.'

One effect, however, of those many years is that Mr. Disraeli has been and gone as Prime Minister of England. The ringleted, lisping, jewelled, velveted aspirant in politics and fashion has made his way from a stool in an attorney's office to the right hand of a throne. It is said that Mr. Disraeli once excused himself from a particular pursuit on the ground that he intended to become Prime Minister. But Mr. Disraeli, had he really believed that flattering whisper which suggests itself to every rising statesman's mind, would have abated the foppery and frippery, the grotesqueness and the exaggeration which have marred as much as they have helped his career, and have put him fatally out of joint with the average common-sense temper of the English people. Mr. Disraeli presents many salient points which easily touch the imagination of literary men, and give occasion for slashing and depreciatory criticism. But the fact is that this brilliant statesman's mind has grown and expanded in proportion as the circle of his hopes and ideas has enlarged. He has had to encounter, as he told the House, many peculiar disabilities. Of them the public know many, but only a portion of the public know the whole. The common idea, disseminated by the Radical penny papers, is that he is as abnormal as the Shadowless Man of German legend—that he is without conscience and without feeling.

Those, however, have observed Mr. Disraeli very superficially who have not, even in later days, noticed in him traces of the deepest feeling. There are some to whom he lays himself open more unreservedly than to those of his own kith. But the neighbours of his own Hughenden home—those who know Mr. Disraeli intimately, cling to him with a peculiar tenacity of regard. He is the embodiment of kindness and knightly courtesy. During that prolonged political career no whisper of complaint of him on any personal relations has reached the public. His personal following, despite the great discontent that has repeatedly prevailed in his ranks—and perhaps never more than at the present time—is exceedingly large. There is a *bonhomie* about him which made him, during his supremacy, as popular a leader of the House as Lord Palmerston had ever been. One night he elicited a laugh in the House of Commons by speaking of Mr. Gladstone as his 'right honourable friend.' It was thought to have been an inadvertence; but the phrase was, more probably, weighed, and intentional. On a public occasion afterwards Mr. Disraeli again termed him 'his right honourable friend, if he might be allowed to call him such.' We should have thought that two great men could not sit just opposite each other for the best part of their lives, in the fullest intimacy of each other's minds, but they would have contracted some form of friendship however eccentric. Even the two Brighton coachmen who passed each other once a day for many years liked each other so well that when one died the other sickened and followed him. But Mr. Gladstone made no sign in answer to this amicable overture: he extended no olive branch in return; and if he should do so, as Newman said of Pusey, he would discharge it from a catapult. Such a little incident as this indicates, not remotely, the contrasted character of the two great rivals. Mr. Disraeli made the House of Commons very merry one night by saying that he never attacked any one. And the remark is not the

paradox which it appears to be. When he attacks any one, it is not with any design to inflict pain or mortification, but in pursuance of a settled plan and policy. It was his design to make Peel ridiculous—to show him as the great vestryman of the parliamentary vestry—to eject him from office as a minister who, of growing and afterwards of fixed liberal opinions, could only misrepresent the Tory followers who had brought him into power. That object once attained, Mr. Disraeli never attacked Sir Robert Peel again. He put the sword into the scabbard and threw both sword and scabbard away. When Sir Robert Peel met with the accident which proved fatal, Mr. Disraeli's name was immediately to be seen among the inquirers at Whitehall Gardens. Much of that political insincerity which is alleged against him is simply the outcome of his Semitic race and of his peculiarly intellectual character. He is, after his intensely Hebraic nationality, not so much an Englishman as a cosmopolitan; he views questions intensely interesting to Englishmen, those in which their whole sympathies are engaged, with daylight, with cold intellect alone; the daylight, the cold intellect of an outsider. This is not a bad mental position to take up, so far as the acquisition of mere truth is conserved, but in the warm region of politics it is one that loses sympathy and provokes hostility. So closely identified are moral and mental notions, that this want of understanding Englishmen, and his semi-foreign character of mind, have led to many of the blunders and failures which have so largely marred his career, and have debarred him from any great share of popularity. He would have been quite a different man if, like so many of our statesmen, he had been to Eton and Christ Church. If he has in his time effectively wielded the tomahawk, there has been an intense desire among his opponents to scalp and exorcise him. Even so respectable a print as the 'Guardian,' admitted a paper on the 'Jew Premier,' which would enlist the vulgarest antipa-

thies against him. If Mr. Disraeli has ever been hard, unscrupulous, and vindictive, it must be admitted that the retaliatory process adopted towards him by his political opponents has also been hard, vindictive, and unscrupulous to a degree.

Yet Mr. Disraeli is an object of constant attention and general admiration to the public, letting alone the fact that one of them left him a legacy of thirty or forty thousand pounds out of such admiration. Strangers crowd the portals, and enter the lobby to see Mr. Disraeli enter the House. He does so in his invariably abstracted way. Lord Palmerston was jaunty when he perceived himself noticed, but by himself he was often anxious and grave. Mr. Disraeli preserves on his countenance a dense imperturbability. You might as well be attempting to study mahogany. In this inhuman impassibility he closely resembles, as in a few other respects, the Emperor of the French. In the House he appears to have a kind of supremacy of loneliness. You seem to divine at once that he is the centre of his party. Courteous as he is to all, hardly any one ever ventures to interrupt that solitude of the crowd. Mr. Disraeli is not a great orator. His speeches have few of the effects of great oratory. He cannot even spur on and excite his party as Mr. Hardy can. He has perhaps only rarely revived the effect of his great philippics against Peel. But what speeches, except, perhaps, Mr. Lowe's, show half the brilliancy and intellectual power of Mr. Disraeli? The effect of them, again although there is not much in the way of pure eloquence, is wonderfully enhanced by his manner. This by-play of manner is at times absolutely irresistible: the emphasis, the glance, the arched eye, the intonation—the immeasurable sarcastic effect sometimes produced by the interposition of a single word. Last session Mr. Disraeli has not much shone. He has been under a great eclipse, which he has gently borne. Despite, at least, one very remarkable speech, we do not believe that Mr. Disraeli really understood the

Irish Church question, that is to say, that he really understood the conflicting points of view with which religious men regarded the question. Now Reform was a question which he understood thoroughly, better, perhaps, than any living man. His treatment of the Reform question was entirely consistent with that democratic Toryism which he has always professed. That earliest chapter of his political life in which he was associated with Hume and O'Connell is not so violently opposed, as it is generally held to be, with his subsequent career. He saw that since the Revolution, the country had been pretty uniformly governed by a cluster of aristocratic families, who played in English history the part of Venetian Doges, enfeebling the power of the crown and the franchise of the people. Mr. Disraeli conceived that the era of aristocratic domination might be closed, and the Tory principle would base loyalty to the throne on the devotion of the masses. These principles have been attacked by a keen parliamentary critic as extreme 'viewiness.' But events have partially pointed towards the verification of this programme. Whiggism is utterly extinct, having given way to Radicalism. Toryism has at least accomplished household suffrage. And although the effect of household suffrage has been to destroy Toryism as a party, far-sighted observers discern that, in the process of events, a Conservative democracy may be other than a dream. We may also say that eminent men of an advanced type of intellectual Radicalism are not slow in confessing, at least in the freedom of conversation, that they have a comprehension of and sympathy with Mr. Disraeli's views.

The great flaw in Mr. Disraeli's career is, that the historical interest belonging to him is so merely personal. He is identified with no great measure. The great object of his career has been the personal success of Mr. Disraeli. His career has been that of long and unavailing opposition. He has been placed in chronic antagonism with the growing convictions and feelings of the majority of Englishmen. We are

very far from saying that in the nature of things there is not a very great advantage in being a drag upon the political machine, and that the late Premier has not done the country essential service in this way. But after all there is something dispiriting and comparatively mean in discharging the office of a drag. His career is, however, in great measure redeemed from this reproach by the brief but splendid period in which he was Prime Minister—a period rich in administrative ability, and crowned with the glorious success of Abyssinia. He is called an adventurer, and there is both fairness and unfairness in the use of the term. In one sense we are all adventurers. Every public man is embarking on a career of adventure. But then Mr. Disraeli has exhibited a certain amount of unscrupulousness which lends point to the application of the phrase. We do not inquire whether the discarded novel of 'Almack's' was or was not his, for if he does not desire to own it we have no desire to accredit it to him. But the unquestionable amount of personality in 'Coningsby' seems to us to be in execrably bad taste. He will fight hard, die hard, and, rather than die, will change the rapier for the stiletto. For all purposes of literary analysis, of the quality of his writings, the critics will go to the novels antecedent to 'Coningsby.' They will there find that this cold, selfish man is brimful of imagination, tenderness, and poetry. Though full of poetry, indeed, he is not a poet. He is right in the idea that the Revolution is the one great era still susceptible of being the subject of an epic. Mr. Lytton has recently made the public acquainted with a remarkable attempt in this direction; but Mr. Disraeli was not the man to produce a true revolutionary epic. But for an analysis of Mr. Disraeli's political character, the series of novels is not of much use until we come to 'Coningsby.' Before long, Mr. Disraeli was a politician of such great note that he no longer ventured to handle politics through the instrumentality of a novel. He seems to write imaginary

history when he became a part of real history itself.*

In addition to the Nemesis which for so many years has been haunting the Tory party, there has been a sad process of disintegration in their ranks. We do not alone mean losses, as in the two last administrations of Lord Derby, when the question of Reform has deprived the Ministry of the invaluable services of their ablest men; nor yet of the gaps made by death, less conspicuous than among the Liberal party, of whom it was truly said by Mr. Gladstone, that within recent years a whole Ministry have descended into their graves. But the party is much broken up: besides the general run of bad luck against them, their election business was notoriously ill-managed. There is also very perceptible want of harmony among their leaders. The three prominent members of the House of Commons are of course Mr. Disraeli, Lord Stanley, and Mr. Gathorne Hardy. No two of them are in thorough accord. Mr. Disraeli and Lord Stanley have points of affinity, but their points of opposition are more numerous, and it is hard to see where there can be any real sympathy between them. A great question is wanted to unite the Conservatives, as it was wanted and found effectual to unite the Liberals. What may be called 'the inner life of the House of Commons' may at the present time be learned with much particularity; but I should be sorry to vouch for the accuracy of the details. Some of the newspapers devote columns to chronicling both the varying effects and also the small details of an evening's gossip. The writer of the 'Times' summary now and then, by a single phrase, mentions anything noticeable which is not given in the report of the speeches, and, as a rule, it would be hardly safe to go beyond this. The 'Daily Telegraph' atones for the poverty of its reports—which are probably only poor because the debates are beyond the calibre of most of

* On Mr. Disraeli's literary character, see paper on 'The Premier Novelist,' in No. 77 for May, 1868.

its readers—by a scenic and descriptive account of the evening's proceedings. One or two of this sort of articles—I am speaking now of the provincial press—are very good, being written by Members of Parliament. The regular reports of the London press, except the 'Times' and the 'Standard,' in the main are hardly satisfactory. They make the most stammering speeches readable, but then they frequently miss a good point. At times we deeply regret to see that positive unfairness has crept into reports that ought to be exempt from any shadow of such an imputation. This is to poison for the public the very fountain of political truth. It is the distinction more of an intense taste for politics that it hardens men's hearts against political opponents, and makes them illiberal and unfair. A great orator sits down amid a hurricane of cheers; the 'Times' fairly states the facts; but the opposite organ to the speaker will merely put the stereotyped 'cheers,' or even withhold that limited meed of approbation. It is curious to find the 'Telegraph' stating that the feeling of the House was of unlimited satisfaction, and the 'Standard' that it was of universal disgust: or some such pair of contradictories. In the familiar accounts of the varying aspects of the House, the reporter honestly gives facts, and he gives them so far as he has facts to give; but of course if the facts fail he must draw upon probabilities or upon his imagination. Such papers will tell you how the Secretary of the Treasury engaged in anxious conference with the Premier, and speaks of the fleeting emotions that chased each other over the Premier's tell-tale countenance; how such a speech made a profound impression—which it didn't—and another fell flat—which was certainly not the case; how one member looked perturbed, and another fierce, and another slouched his hat over his eyes, and another went to sleep, and another plunged his hands into his breeches pockets and stalked grimly into the lobby. I once heard of an unfortunate

penny-a-linner who used to write such descriptions for a country newspaper. I believe he evolved them out of his own consciousness in his lodging off the Strand, and who eked out a precarious livelihood by combining some advertising business with his reports. It is now some years ago when he thus gave an 'incident' for the benefit of the readers of the 'Little Pedlington Gazette.' 'Last night our noble Viscount was juvenile and jaunty enough. He took his customary nap and was all the better for it, when he began to "chaff" some honourable bore. As he lay, we might say, nearly half extended, on the front Treasury bench, we observed, with much interest, that he was wearing a pair of Ford's Eureka trousers, for which, with his customary regularity, he had forwarded a post-office order for seventeen and sixpence.' We do not deny that there is much interesting talk about Parliament that does not appear in the report of the debates; but these are not found in newspapers, but in clubs and conversation, and even then are generally tainted with exaggeration and inaccuracy. Let the public judge of our great statesmen by their deliberate parliamentary utterances, taking care to get them in as authentic a shape as possible, and avoid being influenced by such by-ways as irresponsible and unveritable gossip.

It is not improbable that Lord Stanley will be the future Premier of the Conservatives, in a reconstruction of the party in which Lords Salisbury and Carnarvon will again find place. To our mind it is always a great pleasure to hear Lord Stanley. It is true that there is no passion or energy about him, but there is quite enough passion and energy there already, and it is a pleasure to hear Lord Stanley, cool and calm, and always thoughtful and philosophical. We have, indeed, had little or no opportunity of hearing him this last session; he has been conspicuous by his absence, eloquent by his silence; but now that the Irish Church no longer stops the way we may expect that he will prominently emerge to the

front. Lord Stanley may truly be called a heaven-born statesman. He is *par excellence* the ablest and most fortunate of foreign secretaries. Difficulties, the most entangling and insoluble, clear up before him. We remember how, when Lord Stanley first became a cabinet minister, the House of Commons was astonished at the rare order of excellence which the young statesman displayed. It was the happy fortune of Lord Derby that he could give his son a place in the cabinet without a murmur of criticism or objection. Lord Palmerston had made him the same offer before, and would have been very glad if the offer had been accepted. Perhaps Lord Stanley would have been more self-balanced and harmonized if he had thrown in his lot with the Liberals. But it would hardly become him to split with the party of which his father was chief. There has been something very touching in the relations between the illustrious father and the illustrious son. They seem to have their jokes against each other, if the well-known story is true that Lord Stanley said his father was a clever man if he only knew anything; and that Lord Derby said he could not send his son his version of the 'Iliad' until it was done into prose and published as a blue-book. But we remember how Lord Derby, as Chancellor, was bestowing honorary degrees on distinguished men, and his son among them; in addressing other men, he said, in the usual formula, 'vir honoratissimi,' but addressing his son, he said, 'fili mi dilectissimi,' amid the thunders of the Sheldonian theatre. There was something in his earliest official career so bold, self-reliant, and straightforward—so much ease and independence in the way in which he conducted the complex Indian legislation of which he had charge. But Lord Stanley is better even on the platform than in the House—in that lecturing tone that he adopts. These addresses of Lord Stanley certainly form the very best reading with which we are acquainted in this description of literature. There is no living statesman who may not

be benefited by the almost preternatural sagacity and good sense which Lord Stanley always administers to his hearers in the strongest and most concentrated form. The drawback is that he is cold and chilling, and almost destitute of that human passion which is necessary to animate and cheer on a party. The fact is, that Lord Stanley does not in the least degree care for office. He has said so himself, and all the facts combine to prove it. He has enough wealth, enough fame, and knows what wealth and fame can and cannot do. It is also to be admitted that his future career is in much ambiguity beyond those of other statesmen's, and many of his views are antagonistic to those of the majority of his countrymen.

Mr. Gathorne Hardy is an admirable administrator. He was all the better, as he came between two very inefficient secretaries, such as Mr. Walpole proved himself to be, and Mr. Bruce is suspected of being. There is a strong disposition to run down Mr. Bruce, and very probably Mr. Bruce will be run down accordingly. The penny press takes the deepest interest in hanging matters, and hanging matters are the special province of the Secretary of State. At least such is ostensibly the case, but we believe that the permanent under-secretary used to dispose of all these matters. Mr. Walpole would hang the wrong man and spare the wrong man, at least in the estimation of the penny papers. Finally, he injured his party and his own position by his timid, vacillating conduct in the Hyde Park business. Then he resigned, continuing for some time a minister without portfolio, and subsequently abandoning that anomalous position. Still Mr. Walpole is one of the pillars of his party. Every one likes him; every one respects him, if only for that precious act of resignation on the Reform question of 1852. Mr. Walpole has been a heavy loser through his party. He was a rising Queen's Counsel, and would be probably Lord Justice at this moment if he had not weakly yielded to his

friends and abandoned law for politics. Then there was a chance that he might have been made Speaker, but the chance was never sufficiently good that it should be put to the test of a division. All men respect honest aims and intense conviction, and Mr. Walpole has his full share of this respect. Mr. Hardy has the same, but there is a force of character and a downright eloquence about Mr. Hardy which unfortunately never belonged to his distinguished friend.

Let us proceed a little further, to discuss some of those who, in comparison, are *dii minores*. It is said that when the first Protectionist ministry was formed the Duke of Wellington exclaimed, 'Pakington! Pakington! never heard of the gentleman.' It soon transpired that he was the chairman of the Worcestershire Quarter Sessions. This office exactly suits Sir John. He is essentially a Quarter Sessions man, with Quarter Sessions mind and Quarter Sessions manners. There is a pomposity about him which is provocative of hostility. In office Sir John made himself admirably acquainted with Admiralty organization, and was, in common with all the other ministers, of excellent business capacity. At Drogheda the lord of Westwood was a kind of emperor, and nothing illustrated more strongly the tide in favour than the attempt, albeit unsuccessful, to eject him from the representation. In any Conservative administration Sir John will always be the *pièce de résistance* of the table. Mr. Ward Hunt is a gentleman who first came very prominently forward in the time of the cattle plague. The Northamptonshire squires were considerably astonished when their compeer was first made Chancellor of the Exchequer. But he was Mr. Disraeli's selection, and Mr. Disraeli's powers of selection are very considerable. Mr. Hunt dwarfs as a Chancellor on the comparison that might be made, but he is an exceedingly able and useful man. Sir Stafford Northcote was formerly private secretary to Mr. Gladstone. He now acts against Mr. Gladstone, much, if we may be

forgiven the parallel, as Mr. Earle, Mr. Disraeli's former secretary, has now acted against him. Sir Stafford excited considerable odium last election by hinting, somewhat obscurely, that the Conservative party might not be altogether indisposed to sink the Irish church. It was as imprudent a remark as Sir John Pakington's *naïve* confession about the ten minutes' Reform Bill. Dukes belong to another place, but dual scions abound in the House of Commons. We take a few of the Conservative type. Lord John Manners is deservedly popular and esteemed in the House. It was formerly supposed that there was a kind of poetical and romantic halo about Lord John's head. He was the Lord Henry Sidney of Disraeli's 'Coningsby,' and was supposed to unite strong democratic taste with the chivalry of hereditary rank. Much of that poetic halo has departed, and Lord John has settled down into a fair average man of business. He has made public essays, both in prose and verse, but we cannot conscientiously report in favour of either. He much resembles that other noble poet, the Earl of Winchilsea, who, as Lord Maidstone, wrote some protectionist poetry, which gave him the honour of being 'showed up' by Macaulay. One distich of Lord John's has, however, been immortalized:—

'Let wealth and commerce, laws and learning die,

But leave us still our old nobility.'

But the lines, as they stand, do not, we suspect, completely give the whole sense of the noble poet. He meant that under the fostering care of his order all other perishing social things would revive, and without his order would degenerate.

Another very conspicuous member of the late Government is Lord Robert Montagu. Lord Robert has not, indeed, written poetry, but he has written on church subjects, with only that limited popularity and success which ecclesiastical publications in these days enjoy. Lord Robert has not got the weight and swing of a great parliamentary orator, but he has won the ear of the House, and can occupy it for

two hours at a time. This is a real and a rare achievement. The true bent of Lord Robert's mind is scientific. In political matters he possesses greater insight and originality than he is generally accredited with. He adopts no current opinions from the hour, but works his way carefully to his principles, and from his principles downwards to the facts of policy. We can hardly point elsewhere on the Conservative benches to so great thoroughness and independence of thought. Much beneficial legislation may hereafter be expected from Lord Robert. We remember how amid much wordy war, *de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis*, Lord Robert came forward with a carefully-digested speech on the important subject of the effective drainage of the Thames through all its course. His speech excited great attention, but hardly so much as it deserved; but it is the curse of our country to be over-ridden with big factious talk, while necessary schemes of useful legislation are held over till they are too late, or can only be accomplished at an immensely-exaggerated cost. Such men as Mr. Cave, Mr. Selater-Booth, and Sir M. H. Beach well deserve a few commemorative words. Sir Michael Beach is a young statesman—if he may be called a statesman—but his character, goodness, and antecedents marked him out for special promotion, especially in the great dearth of Conservative rising men. Mr. Butler-Johnstone is simply an ambiguity, that serves to confuse and derange the party.

Nominally a Tory, he frequently votes and speaks on the Liberal side. But as he has steadily declined in power since the most successful of maiden speeches, his adherence to one side or the other counts for little beyond his vote. Then there are gaps in that Opposition bench that tell of the defeats of last autumn. It is really a serious drawback to the Conservatives that on legal questions they are not adequately represented in the House. The late Attorney and Solicitor-General have lost their places, and Mr. Hardinge Giffard, one of the 'coming men' of their party, was unsuccessful at Cardiff. But, after all, they are hardly worse off than the Liberal party.

In point of fact, last session witnessed few special scenes worthy of special commemoration; and the Conservatives made greatly less show than the Ministerialists. The leader made set, formal speeches. The great oratorical success on the Opposition side was attained by Dr. Bull, and in a lesser degree by Mr. Chaplin. It is noticeable that in the last election the Conservatives began to call themselves Constitutionalists, but they must find a better name if they wish to strike the popular imagination. The turn, however, points to a probable coalition between the Moderate Conservative and the Whig remnant. We wait and see, desiring to give all fairness and sympathy, and that impartiality which is at least the one merit which we will venture to claim for these papers.



THE PICCADILLY PAPERS.

BY A PERIPATETIC.

AT BUXTON.

PERHAPS the prettiest railway drive in all England is the journey from Ambergate to Buxton. It takes you through mingled scenes of pastoral loveliness and subalpine boldness to the wild, desolate upland region called the Peak, which is something to Derbyshire as Dartmoor and Exmoor to Devonshire. Though the railway has come here, and millions of trees have been planted beneath the adjacent heights, and a park has been laid out, and villas and terraces adorn the village-town, there has been no essential detracting from the sterile, striking scene, which may well remind you of some of the loneliest parts of Scotland and Wales. A wild, desolate country is the Peak country in winter—a winter that lasts seven months in the year, with country houses most thinly scattered, and so a total absence of society, but still a winter of the right sort, that inflicts only skin-deep cold and brings no damp. But in the summer and the autumn season the victims of rheumatism resort hither, literally in thousands, to try the healing waters of St. Ann. That homely but most beneficent saint had a sacred chapel there, and a cliff fronting her well; but the chapel has disappeared, and the cliff has been hewn out into slopes by the aristocratic Wyatville, the last worst architect of the Georgian era. There can be no doubt but the medicinal waters bring together the great company of the wells. You see the patients, bent and bowed, at every turn; hardly a family comes to Buxton but they come for the sake of the invalid of the family, suffering from gout or rheumatism. Many poor people contrive to crawl here; and we see with pleasure that there is a Buxton Bath Charity, and Devonshire Hospital: we know, also, that the waters have a highly curative effect. They may be drunk for a mere trifle; and in the open air

there is a large drinking-fountain, where all may freely partake. You had better, however, take the advice of some local physician, or you may find yourself in the Street which is called Queer. Buxton has been celebrated from a time to which the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, but there were no magazines in those benighted days, and its fame depended on tradition and report. Even to the time of Queen Elizabeth there was no local history, but her unhappy rival, Queen Mary, tells in her letters how she drank the waters, and how the waters gave her relief. Lord Macaulay mentions Buxton in his first volume, and the mention forms one of the most discreditable bits of his writing: 'England, however, was not, in the seventeenth century, destitute of watering-places. The gentry of Derbyshire and of the neighbouring counties repaired to Buxton, where they were crowded into low wooden sheds, and regaled with oatcake, and with a viand which the hosts called mutton, but which the guests strongly suspected to be dog.* Macaulay wanted to be epigrammatic, and, like most epigrammatists, he sacrificed truth to smartness. It can be proved that at this very time there was large and handsome hotel accommodation. The authority he gives is Tom Brown the younger, who, if we recollect rightly, had run away, crept into an outhouse, and got some poor victuals charitably given to him. On the strength of which the sapient Macaulay states that Buxton consisted of sheds, and wholesome food could not be obtained. But the great Whig historian is often guilty of shaping his facts to suit his sentences, instead of making his sentences suit his facts.

We will let our rheumatic patient hobble about the town and perchance be wheeled into the church or the news-room, sun himself in

* 'History of England,' vol. i., p. 345.

the park, totter along the Crescent colonnade, gain an easy seat on the Slopes to listen to the band, and take his bath or his glass of water, or both, as the case may be. The water of St. Ann's spring, which is the principal one—the other being the ordinary chalybeate—is highly gaseous, and the absorption of the gases held in solution does the good. Those who are not invalids will be able to make longer expeditions, and though immediate walks beyond the limits of the park are not inviting, yet the more distant expeditions are full of interest. There is a cavern—or rather a series of caverns—called Poole's Caverns, the said Poole being popularly supposed to be an outlaw, who secreted himself here, and hid away the proceeds of his lawless depredations. He must have been rather a clever fellow to have been able to pick up much booty in these parts in those days. As a matter of fact, the cavern was known to the Romans, who knew all the natural features of the country perfectly. This cavern is vastly larger than those of Devonshire, and as large, though not so interesting, as Castleton, further on in the Peak country. When you have got through the narrow entrance in the rock into these halls, which extend onwards for the third of a mile, you obtain a tolerably firm footing, and the interior, especially when lighted up by the magnesium light, surpasses expectation. Buxton also boasts a waterfall, of which we see amazing photographs, but it is totally dried up in summer, and reserves itself for the winter use of the residents. To those who are able to go about, Buxton will form a territory very easily exhausted, but it is useful as the centre of a very remarkable and unique district. The railway, which has done much to spoil the picturesque, has also made the picturesque very accessible. It brings more visitors to Buxton, but it also takes them more quickly away. Coming from Ambergate, you obtain wondrous glimpses of deep sunken dales, with their stream murmuring below, their craggy faws, their wooded sides: and it is well and wise to explore these Derbyshire

dales. The line also gives a full view of Matlock, with its mountainous background. Chatsworth, and Had-don, with that sweetest of fishing villages, Rowley, are also easily attainable. The trout and grayling of these streams are excellent. There is also a pond in Buxton Park; and you are charged a guinea a day for fishing in it—with the obvious intention that it should not be fished at all. Then Eylam, with its affecting history of the plague breaking out here, and the inhabitants heroically drawing a cordon round the place, that the infection should not spread, and so the surrounding country was spared while the place itself was nearly utterly depopulated; Tideswell, with the noble church, the Wynnatt, with its awful gorge with long cathedral frontages, and Castleton, with its caverns, its glorious valley and its reliquary castles of the Peak, all furnish points of interest to the tourist, especially if the tourist brings a furnished mind to the investigation, can decipher the story of the rocks, and repeople the past with its associations.

But on the whole, we English take our pleasure sadly. The average watering-place presents very few resources to the man who has no resources in himself. There is grouse shooting in the Peak country, and they conscientiously refuse to issue more tickets than the land is able to bear. There are table d'hôte dinners, where the commons are abundant and not dear, but the waiting is bad. Englishwomen seldom know how to wait well at table. The Buxton company are well worthy of consideration. As a rule, they are north country people who have caught cold in their cold latitudes. They are moneyed and hard-headed, but, as a rule, they lack the refinement and the pleasantness of the south. The northern and southern counties of England present many and much stronger points of dissimilarity than might be expected. In many moral points of view they are twin but diverse nationalities. A whole line of contrasts might be drawn out between the Devonian and the Derbyshire man. At the hotels there is a wonderful

paucity of pretty girls. Youth and beauty do not command the largest amount of material advantages. It is the buxom, well-fed matron, the picture of well-fed contentment, who goes about with her husband to watering-places and show-places; or, if the husband is too much occupied with making filthy lucre, goes about with governess or servants. The pretty girls must wait at home, and have their pretty reveries instead of practical realities. Those who come are mainly with their people in lodgings or hired houses. One regrets that so little is done for their amusement: that there is—at Buxton at least, emblematic of other Buxtons—so little of archery and croquet, dancing and talking parties. Conversation is lost as a fine art, or is, apparently, considered—as was once misanthropically observed—the bane of society. 'Every Englishman is an island,' said Novalis, and one feels this at a watering-place. And mountains rise and seas roll around the Englishwoman, until the magic formula of an introduction, like an 'Open Sesame!' throws down all barriers, and permits the acquaintance perhaps fateful with consequences. When will it be understood that etiquette was made for mankind and not mankind for etiquette? For myself, I am satisfied enough with old college friendly talk over an old sherry; but I regret, and protest against that angularity and stiffness which at this time is too much repeating itself in the watering-places of England.

AT EEL-PIE ISLAND.

Those who are left in London during the autumn months do not perhaps require all the compassion with which they are favoured. The months of August and September, pleasurable everywhere, are very charming in London; indeed, at no other season is London equally endurable. Let any one resident in London just jot down on a piece of paper all the beautiful localities, the choice of which he has for resort, on a holiday or half-holiday, or even when the ordinary day's work is done. The environs of

London are as beautiful as those which surround any European capital, and in the late autumn they are at their loveliest. On the upper range of the imperial river there are two hostels especially familiar to the Londoner who takes his transitory holiday within the limits of the Post Office district. One of them is the Star and Garter, which commands that lordly landscape on the very verge of the royal park. The other is on the very bosom of the Thames—the little inn on the Ait, as Eel-Pie Island is called. It is not given to every man to go to the Star and Garter, and those who go, go in the height of the London season, and their chariot-wheels rolling homewards, rouse the quiet country roads, and snatches of riotous song and merriment are often interspersed. But we all go at all seasons to eat pies at the Eel-Pie House, especially when this distance is the length of our tether when all London is out of town; and you, my friend, if you are wise, will sleep somewhere hereabouts in the pure country air, and be betimes at the office in the morning. Say you have come down to Richmond, and have strolled through the park, then you descend the field to the river side, you pass in front of Ham House, and may linger in the cloisters of its avenues. The large avenue confronts both the house and the river, and the water-entrance was near here, where stately barges brought up royal and noble ladies to the stately mansion, so lonely and apparently deserted. It has its historical associations, and more important ones still in fiction, for behind the house in the trim fields Lord Frederic Verisopht was killed in a duel by Sir Mulberry Hawk. Then the ferry will take you to the island. They don't eat eels there themselves; but they will give them to their customers, or anything else they may want. Here each honest boatman stays if only to get a light or a glass of beer, and wherries stay, and luxuriously fitted boats, where ladies eluster, or take an oar, or breathe music on the waters. The island is a place of universal resort, whether you stay

for hours in the garden, watching the river astir with boats, and the fair uplands stretching upwards to the Park, or you land for a few minutes on your way to Richmond Bridge or Teddington Lock.

Me it much delighteth to grow familiar with the loved wave of Father Thames, whether here or beneath the bending woods of Cliefden, or past the bridge of Henley, or towers of Oxford, or pleasant Pangbourne and by the Caversham woods. I sacrifice to the *genius loci* in the way of partaking of eels and accompaniments, and perhaps of the innocent joys of Moselle or of shandy-gaff. Then, with attendant nymphs, I enter the boat, and confine my exertions to steering, or stretched at full length on cushions, am languidly carried about on the evening waters. It is not a bad plan. Try it, my friends, try it. Better to be out here than in the hot air of the hot theatre; most of all, than seeing 'Formosa'—a vile outrage, insult, and degradation to those brave Oxford rowing men who, with their young arms and shoulders, have just vindicated on this river the honour of old England against the Stars and Stripes. We pass along the shores of what has been well called 'the literary suburb of the eighteenth century.' There is the house where Pope used to live—a portion of it rather, for his old house seems to have covered a much larger extent of ground; and there is the famous grotto so far as it remains. There is Strawberry Hill, just across the road, where Horace Walpole used to entertain his friends, and where the Countess Waldegrave at times now holds almost imperial court. Coming to Teddington, the anglers are busy, and we are told how a trout of six pounds had suddenly leapt into a lady's lap as she was sitting by the stream. Here the tidal water ceases. Off the isle you might sometimes easily walk across the stream, and at another you are in deep water as soon as you are off the Garter Hotel steps. Sit quietly in your places as you descend that deep ugly Teddington Lock. You could not easily escape up those

slimy granite sides. I very nearly came to grief there once, and so I speak feelingly. Then you come out on the broad, natural stream, where the tide never reaches, and the pure clear lights of the sunset sky are reflected on the water, and the lights are presently beginning to shine in the drawing-rooms of the many villas overlooking the stream, and you get bursts of music through the open casements. You do not reach Kingston, but return. As you pass the wayside villas, each with its smooth turf trimmed by the stream, its boating house and its smoking-room overhead, your boatman will tell you how the gardens have all been laid under inundations by the tide, or who has won the cup, or something about the doings of casual fishermen or local magnates—say, for instance, Mr. Benjamin Higgs, who lately adorned these parts with his splendour. At the Ait you pause once more—a cup of tea for the ladies, or to replenish your private flask. The gardens are perhaps noisy now. A set of wild lads have been having their rival matches on the river, or perhaps a London warehouse has disgorged its inmates for an autumn holiday, or some tired clerk with his wife and little ones, or strolling artist, or solitary fisherman—all these may be filling up the rooms, the arbours, and the seats. We are now floating down towards Richmond Bridge. There we see on the height the Marquis of Lansdowne's great house; and here is that most beautiful villa where a Duke of Buccleuch used to groan, 'Oh, that wearisome river; will it always keep flowing on, flowing on!' and there is the little house where the Miss Berries used to live—Horace Walpole's Berries. 'I remember,' said Julia, 'when I parted here with Lucy last year, her ear became entangled again and again with those of a gentleman who was passing and repassing. The last time we passed him, he laughed and said good-night. Quite late his boat floated back quite empty. We were staying at Richmond, and next morning Lucy indicated the last spot where he had laughed his last

good-night, and close by he was found entangled and drowned.' We are a little grave as we make our way through bustling cheerful Richmond to the station. As a fast train whirls us back to town, we moralize how many cheap sweet pleasures lie ready-made to the metropolitans if they would only court those fair scenes close at hand which would be visited by them in thousands if they only lay in some foreign country across the narrow seas.

MR. STOPFORD A. BROOKE.*

Some years ago Mr. Stopford Brooke, at that time chaplain to the English embassy at Berlin, charmed and instructed the public by the life of his extraordinary and gifted friend Robertson of Brighton. For literary finish and perfection it was a matchless biography, or only to be matched with Dean Stanley's 'Life of Dr. Arnold.' Mr. Brooke became the minister of York Street Chapel, and from slender beginnings and a moderate attendance, he has obtained a most legitimate and remarkable success. In the season his chapel presents one of the most vivid spectacles which London can afford, being crowded with the most fashionable and intellectual of audiences. No preacher can succeed better in riveting the attention of an audience. It is easy to be seen that he exercises a peculiar charm over them. The downright earnestness of his manner, the vigour and intensity of his phrases, the poetry, choiceness, and eloquence of his language, the force and originality of his thoughts, mark him out as being the most justly conspicuous of London preachers. Sometimes there is an amount of daring in his speculations, of rhetoric and poetry in his compositions, which would not authorize us in holding him up as a model worthy of general imitation. He is not a preacher who would be at all com-

prehensible to that mass of poor people for whom preaching is primarily intended. But as a man with a special vocation, and filling a special nook in this great London, we readily discern that he has a work to do which he does well. We were rather uneasy when we saw the announcement of the volume of his sermons for publication. In the sermon very much depends on the oratory, and Mr. Brooke has a unique kind of oratory which it would be surpassingly difficult to reproduce on paper. But our fears were utterly groundless. We are glad that these sermons are printed, as affording the perusal and re-perusal, which his hearers would greatly desire. The literary charm of the work is very great; there are many sentences, many phrases, which will linger long on the reader's mind; but the chief value of the book will lie in its substantive teaching, and its remarkable powers of stimulating inquiry and thought.

Here is a passage which, whether you regard the diction or the thought, is true and touching, and hits off exactly so much the notion of modernisms. 'But we have fallen upon faithless times; and more than the mediæval who saw the glint of the angel's wing in the dazzling of the noonday cloud, more even than the Greek who peopled his woods with deities, we see only in the cloud the storehouse of rain to ripen our corn, and in the woods a cover for our pheasants. Those who see more have small cheerfulness in the sight; neither the nymphs nor the angels haunt the hills to us. We do not hear in the cool of the day the voice of God in the trees of the garden. We gaze with sorrow on a world inanimate, and see in it only the reflection of our own unquiet heart. There is scarcely an universally joyous description of nature in our modern poets. There is scarcely a picture of our great landscape artist which is not tinged with the passion of sorrow or the passion of death. We bring to bear upon the world of Nature, not the spiritual eye, but a disintegrating and petty criticism. We do not let feeling have its way, but talk of harmonies of colour and

* Sermons preached in St. James's Chapel, York Street, London, by the Rev. Stopford A. Brooke, M.A., Honorary Chaplain in Ordinary to the Queen. Hamilton, Adams, and Co. 1869.

proportion, and hunt after mere surface-beauty. We train the eye and not the heart, and we become victims of the sensualism of the eye, which renders the imagination gross, and of an instability of the eye, which, unable to rest and contemplate, comprehends the soul of nothing which we see. It is our sick craving for excitement—the superficiality of our worldly life—which we transfer to our relation to Nature. What wonder if Nature refuses to speak to us, and we ourselves are insensible to the wisdom, life, and spirit of the universe?"

Yet we are bound to say that there is much in this most striking and suggestive volume which will subject the author to much criticism, both clerical and lay.

We give one more example of the vivid illustration which Mr. Brook can import into sermons such as was scarcely ever imported before. 'It was my fortune last year, in going from Porcello to Venice, to be overtaken by one of the whirlwinds which sometimes visit the south. It was a dead calm, but the whole sky, high overhead, was covered with a pall of purple, sombre and smooth, but full of scarlet threads. Across this, from side to side, as if dashed by their invincible armies, flew at every instant flashes of forked lightning; but so lofty was the storm—and this gave a hushed terror to the scene—that no thunder was heard. Beneath this sky the lagoon water was dead purple, and the weedy shoals left naked by the tide dead scarlet. The only motion in the sky was far away to the south, where a palm-tree of pale mist seemed to rise from the water, and to join itself above to a self-enfolding mass of seething cloud. We reached a small island and landed. An instant after, as I stood in the parapet of the fortification, amid the breathless silence, this pillar of cloud, ghostly white, and relieved against the violet darkness of the sky, its edge as clear as if cut by a knife, came rushing forward over the lagoon, driven by the spirit of wind, which, hidden within it, whirled and coiled its column into an endless spiral. The wind

was only there, at its very edge there was not a ripple; but as it drew near our island it seemed to be pressed down upon the sea, and, unable to resist the pressure, opened out like a fan in a foam of vapour. Then, with a whirl which made every nerve thrill with excitement, the imprisoned wind leaped forth, the water of the lagoon, beaten flat, was torn away to the depth of half an inch, and as the cloud of spray and wind smote the island, it trembled all over like a ship struck by a great wave. We seemed to be in the very heart of the universe at a moment when the thought of the universe was most sublime.

'The long preparation, and then the close, so unexpected and so magnificent, swept every one completely out of self-consciousness; the Italian soldiers at my side danced upon the parapet and shouted with excitement. For an instant we were living in Nature's being, not in our own isolation.

'It taught me a lesson; it made me feel the meaning of this text, "Whosoever loseth his life shall find it;" for it is in such scanty minutes that a man becomes possessor of that rare intensity of life which is, when it is pure, so wonderful a thing that it is like a new birth into a new world, in which, though self is lost, the highest individuality is found. I am conscious now, on looking back, though the very self-consciousness involved in analysing the impression seems to spoil it, that it is in such a moment when, as it were, you find your individuality outside of you in the being of the universe, that you are most individual, and most able to feel your being though not to think of it.'

We give these brief citations from Mr. Brook, because the nature of such a work is best ascertained by quotations, and this is hardly the place where we could formally review the book. But we vehemently exhort our readers to procure the work and study it for themselves. These extracts will as little convey a notion of the author's remarkable system as a brick will tell of a house or a finger of a statue.

NOTES ON BOOKS.

The best article in the current number of the 'Quarterly' is unquestionably the very remarkable paper—a gem in its way—entitled the 'Argument of Design.' In these days, when popular science is so keenly discussed, and is fraught with the deepest religious issues, such an article as this is in the highest degree well-timed, and it is distinguished with a very high degree of cogency and even of brilliancy. The reviewer traverses the whole field occupied by such writers as M. Comte, Mr. Lewes, Professor Huxley, and Mr. Darwin, at least so far as they are concerned with the great subject of his essay, and a paper more keen, searching, and adequate could not have been written. He comes back to Paley's argument, which he shows to be left unshaken by modern scientific speculation. A very important part of the discussion is concerned with Darwinism, or the doctrine of the transmutation of species. The reviewer declines either to accept or reject this famous hypothesis, but with great keenness he shows that the argument of design does not stand or fall by either process. Mr. Darwin admits that the first life-germ was a creation, but if the Creator had wrapped up in this first organism the development of the existing world, and if intention fashioned that rudimentary germ, then we have here the admission of the argument of design. The modern philosophy that survives the old Lucretian doctrine that organization has been the result of mere variability, is exposed to just ridicule. M. Comte, who censures nature, and thinks, like King Alfonso, that the world might have been made much better, holds that the growth even of the human eye is altogether fortuitous. The leading position of the essayist is that there is a certain construction which the facts of Nature call for and necessitate, not admitting any other; the construction of design which attaches to visible arrangement, system, and adaptation: this construction adheres to the facts, is

cemented to them, and cannot be separated from them. It is obviously impossible for us to expand the argument, but it is important to call attention to the paper as exhibiting the present stage of the discussion on the deepest and most important problem of science and life.

Two medical works have been lately written, each of which apparently aims at a wide popularity, but hardly deserves such. So many of us remember Sir James Clark, who was not alone a fashionable physician, but almost consolidated the science of climatology, that we should wish him well in any literary venture, especially when that venture was the biography of that most humane benefactor of the human race, Dr. Conolly.* To Dr. Conolly is due that the cruel restraint which used to be practised in the treatment of the insane is a thing of the past altogether, and his beneficial example has penetrated to many countries. All honour to his memory, but still a biography, which is best described as a statistical biography, without a particle of literary merit, is a work which cannot be said to be worthy either of Sir James Clark or of Dr. Conolly. Dr. Elam has published a book with the somewhat sensational title of 'A Physician's Problems.†' But there is nothing really sensational about it. A physician's problems are of two sorts—those which no physician would venture to tell the public of the actual conflicts that beset the medical mind, on the nature of therapeutics, and conflicting theories of disease. There is a great deal of very safe talk that may be talked concerning brain and matter, moral epidemics, and so on. Three drawbacks exist in reference to Dr. Elam's works, (1) that the great body of his work is full of old familiar matters; (2) that he has deliberately ignored most of the real practical problems of the profession; (3) that on most subjects of difficulty he speaks in a

* 'Memoir of Dr. Conolly.' By Sir James Clark. Murray.

† 'A Physician's Problems.' By Dr. Elam. Macmillan.

hesitating, tentative way, and does not appear to hold any fixed principles of his own.

Our readers will thank us for mentioning two really good novels, which we can most conscientiously recommend. We do not say that they are well-constructed stories, or that they will be satisfactory to the average reader of the circulating library. These are novels by those clever authors, Mrs. Beecher Stowe* and Mrs. Oliphant.† We like Mrs. Stowe much better in her stories than in writing prominent sensational papers on any hidden mysteries of Lord Byron's life. Her work is really valuable in a two-fold way. First of all she has re-constructed a remarkable chapter in the history of manners, by putting together a faithful picture of the primitive life of New England, which is all but a thing of the past. Next there is a bold grappling with these earliest problems in morals and religion which underlie all theology and life. Mrs. Oliphant's story has some points of affinity with this tale. The plot is dreary enough. A young girl is discarded by her young lover, and marries an old minister. He is killed, and she then marries her former sweetheart. She then discovers that she has married her first husband's murderer. But the description of a revival in a remote Highland district, of the scenery of loch and moor, the keen analysis of motive and character, the resolute grappling with subjects on which many people are not even able to think, make this a remarkable book. As novels they are hardly readable, but as works of moral and psychological interest, we have read none other better for years.

But we must not omit to give a few words of welcome to our own valued contributor, Mr. Whyte-Melville.‡ He has published a volume of lyrics which will be extremely welcome to his very

* 'Old Town Talk.' By Harriet Beecher Stowe. Sampson: Low and Son.

† 'The Minister's Wife.' By Miss Oliphant. Hurst and Blackett.

‡ 'Songs and Verses.' By G. J. Whyte-Melville. Chapman and Hall.

many admirers. Mr. Whyte-Melville is a genuine singer of songs, and our thought all along is how exceedingly well these songs would be set to the music which they would stimulate and deserve. The readers of his romances—and how many readers he has—will here find various poems identified with favourite passages in their favourite tales. As in all true lyrics, there is often a sad undertone in our author's musical pieces. Thus, to quote a verse from a plaintive poem entitled 'There leave thy gift upon the altar:'—

'Gone the glad hope in a dawn of to-morrow,
Faded, forgotten the noon of to-day,
Night drawing closer in sadness and sorrow,
Gloom in the valley and ghosts on the way;
All the bright hours of the past I can reckon,
Memories of anguish bequeathing to me,
Man cannot guide me nor angel can beckon,
God of the hopeless! whom have I but
Thee?'

This is in remarkable contrast to the jovial Lincolnshire hunting song, 'The Monks who live under the Hill,' and 'The Galloping Squire.' He is very fond of the use of the musical refrain in his songs, as in two poems, really on the same subject, entitled somewhat quaintly, 'Ephemeral,' and 'Commune Malum.' The last is the sort of poem which, like some of Mr. Haynes Bailly's songs, might bring a touch of genuine pathos into many a drawing-room:—

'... the fruit that never ripens,
Blossomed once for me,
Far away in bonny Scotland,
Down by the sea.

'Pale and calm the wave was sleeping,
Pale and soft the skies above;
All was peace, and all in keeping
With the holy hush of love;
While the pearl of price beside me
Promised mine to be,
Far away in bonny Scotland,
Down by the sea.

'Pearl I never thought could fall me,
Jewel of my darker lot,
How should faith and truth avail me?
All dishonoured and forgot.
Would that death had come between us,
While we yet were free,
Far away in bonny Scotland,
Down by the sea.'

* Better than shame and sorrow,

Trust betrayed and spirit strife,
 Longing night and lonely morrow,
 Are not these but death in life?

All the heart I had lies buried,
 There let it be!

Far away in bonny Scotland,
 Down by the sea.

It will be seen that Mr. Whyte-Melville's, unlike some other poems which we have been discussing, have not much serious purpose, and are of a limited compass; but it behoves the reader in every work to respect the poet's end. Mr. Whyte-Melville offers us his modest volume of 'Songs and Verses,' and as such they are eminently graceful and spirited.

Since Mr. Bonney wrote his capital book on the Alpine Regions last year, there has been no more delightful work than Mr. Macmillan's 'Holidays on High Lands.'* Alpine literature is now assuming Alpine proportions, and the conscientious tourist, bent on improving his mind and his opportunities, is almost obliged to carry a library about him. Let him keep to the familiar Murray, and the later lights of Bell and Bonney, and Mr. Macmillan will prove a charming companion in discoursing of Alpine plants, and something more and something better. Those adventurous tourists who are thinking of crossing the Atlantic to do the Pacific Railway, will do well to look at Captain Townshend's 'Ten Thousand Miles of Travel, Sport, and Adventure.'† Captain Townshend belongs to the Life Guards and has belonged to a University, and he writes his book in a thoroughly pleasant, gentlemanly, and unaffected way. He was out before the line was completed, but he traversed the track, and proves an excellent *compagnon du voyage*. He draws a frightful picture of the atrocities inflicted by the Indians on any Europeans who might fall into their hands, and we fear that a still more frightful picture might

be drawn of the cruelties inflicted by the Europeans upon the Indians. We trust that peace is now secure; but should hostilities continue, the traveller by the Pacific railway will stand a very good chance of having his train overthrown, and leaving his scalp behind him. Captain Townshend gives us to understand that the Indians are quite up to the art of upsetting a train. He mentions one fact which is not without a political significance. He met an officer in the American cavalry, who had been persuaded by the Fenians to go over to Ireland, which was represented to him as being ripe for revolt, in the capacity of general. The man went over, made some acquaintance with the interior of Clonmel gaol, and escaping, he refuses to tell how, came back thoroughly satisfied that the state of things in Ireland was totally different from what he had been led to believe. We had marked for special notice a very interesting account of the railway passage across the Isthmus of Panama. The climate is the worst, and the railway has been prodigal in sacrifices of human life beyond all parallel. Here is a specimen of the narrative where it slightly begins to gush: 'What a paradise of the rivers is this beautiful land through which the railway passes! The constant rain and the intense heat of the sun produce a vegetation more lovely and luxuriant than is to be seen anywhere else in the world. Gigantic trees, mahogany, bamboo, palms of every variety, bananas, tree ferns, magnolias, tall grasses, and innumerable flowering trees and shrubs, compose the forests, and fringe the banks of the rivers, while from the surface of the swamps spring white, yellow, and blue lilies of every size and description. Amid all this glorious foliage dart birds of brilliant plumage, and insects whose glittering wings rival the hues of the rainbow. There is, however, a reverse side to this picture. Through the forests crawl deadly snakes, while the rivers and swamps teem with hideous alligators, and the same abundant rain and burning sun which call

* 'Holidays on High Lands; or, Rambles and Incidents in search of Plants.' By the Rev. Hugh Macmillan. Macmillan.

† 'Ten Thousand Miles of Travel, Sport, and Adventure.' By F. Frank Townshend, B.A. Hurst and Blackett.

forth such exuberance of animal and vegetable life, produce the pestilent malaria and deadly vomits. Nature thus reconciles us to the scanty vegetation and the cold skies of our own northern climate, where reptiles and fever are comparatively unknown.

A set of books might be mentioned which deal exclusively with European travel. But this is ground which so many have traversed, and

on which such a literature exists, that it would be idle to give my *catalogue raisonnée* of such works. At the same time the gentle critic would not speak unkindly of such works of supererogation. They help to break up the ground for the intending tourist, and they help to furnish the traveller with pleasant souvenirs when he comes home and tries to reconstruct in his mind the story of his summer wanderings.

AUTUMN.

AS I sit in my study musing
This bright September day,
Idly watching the swallows
Skim by on their swerving way,

I well might think there had fallen
A sorrow on all things around,
Glooming all pleasant pictures,
Saddening each passing sound :

And yet through my open casement
The scene is pure and bright,
And I know not what is the shadow
That seems to dusk the light.

For the sunbeams lie in a gold-flood,
From the lawn before the door
To the yellow wall in the distance
Of chestnut and sycamore ;

And a little child is playing
By the gate where the laurels grow,
And merry shouts come soften'd
From the village school below.

But Nature, in passionate silence,
Seems a vanish'd perfection to crave,
Like some mute o'erburdened maiden
Beside her lover's grave,

When she sits by the mossy turf-mound,
Tearless, and very still,
And the sun, on the crimson horizon,
Is dropping below the hill.

For Decay's lean, wrinkling fingers
Have shrivell'd both leaf and bough ;
And the spring-tide and summer of
beauty
Are only a bright dream now.

And the reaper hath left nought behind
him,
And the slender shafts of the flowers
Are shrunk and wither'd and rotting
Through the dank forsaken bowers.

And to one pacing slow and thoughtful
By woodland, or park, or glen,
The dry leaves dropping around him
Seem like footfalls of ghostly men.

So methinks 'tis a season for sadness,
And for deep thoughts in the soul,
For the years of my life are passing
As the seasons onward roll ;

And I say to my heart, ' Be heedful,
O heart, lest the promis'd sheaves
Thou hast harvested up in thy fancy
Prove but dead and worthless leaves.'

J. W. T.





STUDIOS FROM 1811 TO THE PRESENT
AND THE
ARTISTS WHOSE WORKS ARE HERE
REPRODUCED

with the abundance of animal and vegetable life, producing the pestilential miasma and deadly results. Nature thus recedes us to the scanty vegetation and the cold skin of our own northern clime, where sterile and few are comparatively unknown.

A list of names might be mentioned which deal exclusively with European travel. But this is special literature enough here translated, and

on which such a literature exists, that it would be idle to give my catalogue raisonné of such works. At the same time the gentle critic would not speak harshly of such works of imperfection. They help to break up the ground for the intending tourist, and they help to furnish the traveller with pleasant converse when he comes home and tries to reconstruct in his mind the story of his summer wanderings.

And I have seen and heard of you
And I have seen and heard of you
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J. W. E.





STUDIES FROM LIFE AT THE COURT OF ST. JAMES'S.

LADY ELMA BRUCE.

Drawn by the late George H. Thomas. Engraved by William L. Thomas.